

THE TIMES

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Sinn Fein votes to abandon force

Balcombe St gang hailed as 'our Mandelas'

BY MARTIN FLETCHER, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

SINN FEIN last night took the momentous decision to pursue a united Ireland through politics, not force, at a conference electrified by the appearance of the infamous Balcombe Street gang.

The conference in Dublin voted by a massive majority to support the Good Friday peace agreement, which says there can be no Irish unity without the consent of Northern Ireland's Unionist majority. It also voted almost unanimously to change Sinn Fein's constitution so that its representatives can sit in the new assembly of a British province that the IRA has spent 30 years trying to destroy.

The votes were an important boost for the peace process and a huge personal victory for Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness, architects of their party's peace strategy. Mr Adams hailed what he called an "historic decision".

The British and Irish Governments had also shown their intense desire for a Yes vote by allowing several prominent IRA prisoners leave from the top-security Maze and Portlaoise prisons so that they could express their support for the agreement.

Padraig Wilson, IRA commander at the Maze, said: "There are concerns, though I would not say doubts, over the leadership position - we are happy enough about that."

The emotional highlight of the day, however, was the unexpected entrance of the Balcombe Street gang, who terrorised London in the mid-1970s. Joseph O'Connell, Har-

ry Duggan, Eddie Butler and Hugh Doherty are serving multiple life sentences for their campaign of bombings and shootings, including the murder of Ross McWhirter.

Last week they were moved from England to Portlaoise prison in Ireland and yesterday delegates shouted, whistled and stamped their feet in a deafening 10-minute ovation as they entered the conference hall, punching the air in triumph. There were even tears as Mr Adams hugged them on stage.

Mr Adams said the intention was not to provoke Unionists, but the men were "our Nelson Mandelas" enjoying their first day of freedom in 23 years and their presence was "a great delight". Earlier this year the Home Secretary ruled that they would have to spend the rest of their lives in prison because of the enormity of their crimes. They will be allowed 36 hours of freedom before being driven back to prison today.

The votes were taken after five hours of passionate debate in which a string of top Sinn Fein members presented the agreement not as an end in itself, but as a step towards Irish unity, and the assembly as the "new frontline" of the republican struggle. They insisted that they were not legitimising or accepting partition, and argued that if they did not take their seats in the assembly they could not be represented on the new cross-border bodies.

Mr Adams claimed that Sinn Fein's peace strategy had transformed the political agenda over the past five years



IRA prisoners Hugh Doherty, Michael O'Brien and Padraig Wilson acknowledge their standing ovation as they join supporter Geraldine Feridy on stage at the Sinn Fein conference

and said that the priority now was to build Sinn Fein's political strength to achieve yet more change. "Today is an important day for us, in many ways an historic day, but it is not as important as tomorrow or the next day," he said. "Today we cleared the way for the future. Tomorrow we start to build the future. The future is freedom."

Mr Adams also used his speech to assure Unionists that "we face the future seeking a good faith and genuine engagement with you. When we call for the end of the British presence in Ireland, we do not mean our Unionist neighbours. You have as much right to a full and equal life on this island as any other section of our people."

Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, welcomed the vote, saying: "I recognise how significant this decision is for republicans and pay tribute to the leadership of Gerry Adams in bringing his party to support the agreement."

The euphoria was marred only by the public emergence of a new terrorist splinter group calling itself the "True IRA" that pledged to continue the war against Britain and

launched an overnight mortar attack on a Co Fermanagh police station. The group is led by the IRA's former quartermaster general.

With 11 days to the referendum, attention now shifts to the Unionists. They are deeply divided on the merits of the agreement, and without a Unionist majority in favour, it would be unworkable. They want the IRA disbanded before Sinn Fein is admitted to the assembly or IRA prisoners are released, but Mr Adams rejected that demand.

Cycle broken, page 2

Victim's daughter hails release

BY ANDREW PIERCE

THE daughter of Professor Gordon Hamilton-Fairley last night said she welcomed the release of the Balcombe Street siege terrorists if it helped to persuade others to end violence. Diana Hamilton-Fairley, 41, whose father was mistakenly killed by an IRA car bomb in 1975, said last night: "That Northern Ireland is to live in peace means more to me than anything else in

making sense of my father's futile death. "But the men of violence have no right to celebrate their role in bringing this about. Violence gains nothing. It was the men, and women, of peace who have achieved this."

Lord Tebbit, the former Tory Party chairman whose wife was paralysed in the IRA's Brighton bomb, was appalled by the release of the terrorists. He said last night: "Whatever will this govern-

ment do next in the name of peace?" Colin Parry, the father of Tim Parry, the 12-year-old murdered in the Warrington bombing, said: "I've come to accept that all sides must take part in the peace process, and like it or not some of them are serving time."

John Arbuthnot, father of the IRA's Brighton bomb, was appalled by the release of the terrorists. He said last night: "I think it's terrible. They should stay in British prisons."

Everton saved from the drop

Everton avoided relegation from the Premiership after drawing 1-1 with Coventry while Bolton lost 2-0 at Chelsea. Charlton and Sheffield United won the first legs of the play-offs against Ipswich and Sunderland. Page 25

Motorway drama

A lorry driver called police on his mobile phone to report an emergency: he was travelling along the M1 and his accelerator was stuck. Five police cars formed an escort clearing motorists from the path of the 38-tonne tipper truck. Page 3

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Freetown takes to streets to cheer British arms 'hero'

FROM SAM KILEY IN ABIDJAN

PETER PENFOLD, the Foreign Office official at the centre of the "arms-to-Africa" scandal, has emerged as Freetown's greatest hero. Private and government radio stations yesterday broadcast calls for tens of thousands of Sierra Leoneans to turn out today at a rally in support of the High Commissioner.

Mr Penfold, who has been recalled to London to face investigations from Customs and Excise into allegations that he conspired to the sending of arms to Sierra Leone as part of a plan to depose a military junta, and restore President Kabbah to power, was described by leading intellectuals as a "hero" and a "saint". Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, was described as the "most hated man in the country" - a remarkable achievement given that the deposed junta leader, Johnny Koroma,



Voice of Swimming 'took secret commissions'

BY CRAIG LORD AND DOMINIC KENNEDY

HAMILTON BLAND, the BBC's "voice of swimming", faces humiliation today as an independent inquiry concludes that he effectively took bribes while advising how public money should be spent to build new pools.

The long-serving commentator accepted "secret commissions" from a supplier when acting as a paid adviser to local councils, according to Mark Gay, one of the country's leading sports lawyers. Mr Gay's report was ordered by the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) last July after an investigation by The Times and World in Action showed how

DTI pleads: Don't send us Robinson

BY NICHOLAS WAIT, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

ONE of Whitehall's most senior civil servants has advised Downing Street against transferring Geoffrey Robinson to the Department of Trade and Industry because of his controversial business past.

Michael Scholar, the Permanent Secretary at the DTI, has made it clear that he does not want the multimillionaire Paymaster General "anywhere near" his department. Mr Scholar's view was summed up by a Whitehall source who said: "Geoffrey Robinson has had a huge array of business interests. You never know what is going to come out next with him."

Mr Scholar, a former Private Secretary to Baroness Thatcher, contacted Sir Richard Wilson, the Cabinet Secretary, after reports that the Prime Minister was planning to switch Mr Robinson from the Treasury to the DTI in the impending reshuffle. Such an intervention by a

Chris Smith, the Culture, Media and Sport Secretary, has said that if the report contains evidence of criminal behaviour, he will pass it to the police.

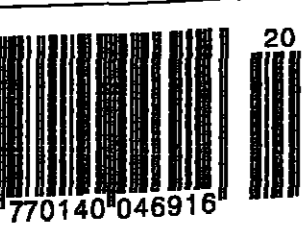
Despite the evidence published last summer, the BBC continued to use Mr Bland as a commentator, sending him to events such as the European championships in Seville. He is scheduled to broadcast from the Commonwealth trials in Sheffield this July.

The BBC has asked to see the report. The future of Mr Bland, a commentator since 1975, will be considered by senior figures, including Dave Gordon, executive editor of BBC Sport.



Bland: "brought ASA into disrepute"

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2 HOME NEWS

Political power may break cycle of republican conflict

By MARTIN FLETCHER CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

EVEN as Sinn Fein voted to embrace constitutional politics in Dublin yesterday, a self-styled "True IRA" that rejects the Good Friday peace accord was claiming responsibility for a mortar attack on a police station in Belleek, Co Fermanagh.

war machine is once again being directed at the British Cabinet. This was a clear attempt to attract yesterday's "no" voters. The group is led by the man who resigned as the IRA's Quartermaster-General last October in protest at Sinn Fein's participation in the peace talks. A stocky man who lives in Dundalk, Co Louth, he took with him several of the IRA's "engineering department" or "bombmakers" and details of where the IRA's arsenal is stored.

hardliners have since signed up and the group is now thought to have more than 50 activists, mainly in the border counties and the Irish Republic. Using IRA technology and material, it has launched bomb attacks in the Co Armagh towns of Moira and Portadown and mortar attacks on police stations in Armagh city and Forkhill in an attempt to destabilise the peace process. Yesterday's attack in Fermanagh caused no injuries or damage. The group built the 1,000lb car bomb that was intercepted as it was

THE REBEL TERRORISTS

boarding a ferry for England on the eve of the Grand National last month. Its political counterpart is the 32-County Sovereignty Committee whose most prominent member is Bernadette Sands McKeivitt, sister of Bobby Sands, the hunger striker and republican hero. The republican movement has been bedevilled throughout the century by splits between those who would pursue Irish unity through

armed struggle and others who considered the political route more promising. Michael Collins split the movement when he signed the 1921 treaty that led to Ireland's partition. He presented the treaty as a "stepping stone" to independence for the entire island, but many republicans disagreed and civil war ensued. In 1927 Eamon de Valera, the rebels' leader, again divided the IRA when he entered an Irish Parliament

that the purists considered illegitimate. In 1969 the Provisional IRA split from the Official IRA when the latter jettisoned its previously sacrosanct principle of "abstentionism" and opted to sit in the Irish Parliament. In 1986 the Provisionals themselves split when Gerry Adams led a successful bid to end abstentionism in the Dail. On that occasion the purists, led by Ruairi O'Bradaigh, a former Sinn Fein president, left to form Republican Sinn Fein. Yesterday's conference

brought the movement full circle. Sinn Fein voted to support a partitionist agreement that Mr Adams - like Michael Collins three quarters of a century earlier - presented as a stepping stone to Irish unity. The True IRA duly accused Mr Adams of selling out by "playing the game of Collins and de Valera", but Sinn Fein officials were adamant that this did not amount to yet another split. They dismissed the dissidents as a "slight splinter" and argued that no paramilitary

group could flourish without significant community support. That support would not exist if Sinn Fein's peace strategy paid dividends. In other ways, too, the True IRA is seeking to establish itself in unusually infertile soil. Republicans are exhilarated by the electoral advances and political gains they have made in recent years. This time, crucially, Mr Adams and the movement's politicians have succeeded in bringing the bulk of the militarists with them, instead of splitting from them.

The terror gang that was jailed for 2,000 years

By STEWART TENDLER, STEPHEN FARRELL AND GUY WALTERS

THE Balcombe Street gang carried out about 50 bombings and shootings in the early 1970s and killed at least 16 people. Their jail sentences totalled more than 2,000 years. Martin O'Connell, 46, Harry Duggan, 45, Eddie Butler, 48, and Hugh Doherty, 47, earned their collective name from the street in Marylebone, Central London, where they held a couple hostage in December 1975 for a week. The gang were cornered after extra police patrols spotted them opening fire on a Mayfair restaurant. The police gave chase and the gang forced their way into the flat. The siege ended peacefully after negotiations led by Sir Peter Imbert, who later became Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police.

and his widow Daphne, 67, upon learning last month that the Balcombe Street gang were to be moved to Irish jails, said: "I am all for peace but people should not forget my children and I were robbed of a husband and father." The group also murdered Captain Roger Goad, the explosives expert who was blown up while attempting to defuse a bomb that had left outside a shoe shop in Kensington. One of the bombers said they had deliberately tried to kill a bomb disposal officer: "Our intention was obvious - to get an expert, an explosives expert. We succeeded, didn't we? He didn't take his precautions." The gang also had more

operator at the Marconi School in Cork. He headed a bomb-making factory near his home in Co Clare before he was sent to London. He received 12 life sentences. Harry Duggan, 45 With Doherty, Duggan is credited with the killing of Mr McWhirter, although all four men were convicted of the murder. Duggan planned IRA operations and was also linked by Irish police to the £8 million robbery of paintings from the collection of industrialist Sir Alfred Beit in April 1974. In order to fool the security forces, the IRA had said that Duggan had been "killed in action" in the early 1970s. Duggan carried out the London bombing campaigns of 1974 and 1975. He was given 12 life sentences. Eddie Butler, 48 A former labourer with Limerick County Council, Butler left Ireland in the early 1970s. With Duggan, Butler was responsible for planting a bomb at the London home of Edward Heath a month before the Balcombe Street siege. He received 12 life sentences.

THE PRISONERS

The group were responsible for the blasts at the Hilton Hotel in London; at Scott's restaurant in Mayfair; and Walton's restaurant in Chelsea. During their trial, O'Connell claimed to have made the bombs used in the Guildford and Woolwich pub blasts. In Guildford, five people were killed and 57 others were injured in the explosion. Among their victims was Ross McWhirter, the author, who had offered £50,000 for their capture. Hiding in a shrubbery, the terrorists shot him on the doorstep of his North London home. Another was Professor Gordon Hamilton-Fairley, a cancer specialist. He was killed by mistake in October 1975 in Kensington when he walked his dog past the bomb intended for his next-door neighbour, the Tory MP Sir Hugh Fraser. He left behind four children

ambitious plans. A letter found in flat used by one of them, spoke of flooding part of the Tube. It also mentioned a London reservoir, with the order to "do intelligence on it, with a view to poisoning lakes and blowing up pumping stations." Martin O'Connell, 46 Brought up in Co Clare, O'Connell acted as the gang's spokesman during the siege and the subsequent trial. O'Connell, an intelligence "officer" was the gang's reconnaissance man who produced plans of New Scotland Yard and the lists of possible targets. All four knew how to make bombs and later denied that the group had a leader. O'Connell, a pioneer of the Provisional IRA's booby-trap bombs detonated by radio signals, trained as a wireless

Hugh Doherty, 47 Brother of Sinn Fein vice-president, Pat Doherty, Doherty grew up in the Gorbals district in Glasgow. Hugh Doherty joined the IRA in the early 1970s. He was recruited as a "sleeper" in London, before becoming part of the cell which killed six people. He was given 11 life sentences and another 139 years for other bombing offences. Doherty signs his paintings in Gaelic with the initials P.O.W. after his name.



The Balcombe Street siege lasted six days after an IRA gang were spotted by police. The terrorists were jailed for more than 2,000 years

'Put all the rebels we can into enemy camp'

By AUDREY MAGEE IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

THE decision by Sinn Fein to participate in constitutional politics was preceded by five hours of charged debate and emotional outpourings as IRA prisoners on weekend release took the stage. More than 60 delegates spoke, most of them in favour of the motion to remove the ban in Sinn Fein's constitution on members taking part in a Northern Ireland assembly. The last similar vote was in 1986, when Sinn Fein voted to take their seats in the Irish Parliament, causing an irrevocable

THE DEBATE

division in the party. Gerry Adams wanted, at all costs, to avoid a repetition of that split. More than 1,400 delegates attended the conference at the Royal Dublin Society's hall, a former bastion of British colonialism lined with books from the British Museum. The vast majority of speakers was in favour of the motion but some, mostly young and from the Irish Republic, were vehemently opposed. Don O'Leary, from Cork, said that Sinn Fein should renegotiate the

Belfast agreement, which requires Ireland to change Articles 2 and 3 of its constitution, laying territorial claim to Northern Ireland. "Do not fall for the British tactic of divide and conquer." But Martin Meehan, a veteran republican from North Belfast, said that the emphasis on Articles 2 and 3 was misplaced. Republicans had to adapt and to continue their struggle in the assembly. Gerry Kelly, convicted of attempted murder and possessing explosives, who escaped from the Maze prison in 1983, said that the assembly opened "another front in the struggle against Unionism... We need to put as many

rebels as we can into the enemy camp." Padraic Wilson, who leads the IRA wing in the Maze, said that prisoners were united in their support for the agreement. He said that the British Government should copy its Dublin counterpart and release prisoners. Rita O'Hare, a member of the Sinn Fein council, who proposed the motion, said: "The old certainties are gone for ever. But there is little sign of a new mindset that will carry Unionism into the new era. Unionists have to realise that the garrison is gone and that a new, inclusive Ireland is the future."

Warning over tuition fee shortfall

UNIVERSITIES have been warned that one in ten students may fail to pay their tuition fees, to be introduced this autumn, leaving them with a funding gap of up to £20 million. Finance officers have warned vice-chancellors that the level of non-payment is likely to be higher than the 8 per cent default rate for the Government's student loans programme. Ministers have asked the universities to be patient with students when the first fees are due. Martin Harris, chairman of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, writing in today's first instalment of *The Times Good University Guide*, says no student will be penalised for not being able to pay on arrival. A third of full-time undergraduates will not be required to pay because

Universities are asked to be patient with late-paying students, reports John O'Leary their parents' income is too low, while others will be charged a proportion of the £1,000 fee. The Higher Education Funding Council for England expects universities and colleges to collect £130 million in fees in 1998-99. Arthur Lucas, principal of King's College London, said universities were concerned that the introduction of fees might affect the number of students registering for courses and increase the drop-out rate. Applications from school-leavers have increased nationally, but there has been a decline among mature students. Professor Harris says in his article

that universities are determined to prevent the drop-out rate from rising. His own university, Manchester, is one of many offering the option of payment by instalments - as well as making money available for short-term help in cases of hardship. In addition, the new scheme may be much more costly than universities were led to expect. Miles Hedges, Nottingham University's director of finance, said that running costs were likely to be at least twice as high as Government advisers had predicted. Mr Hedges, who made the assessments for the finance directors' national

group, said: "We are all working in the dark because the fee regulations have not even been finalised yet, and the students arrive in September. All we can say is that the default rate is likely to be between 6-12 per cent and to be highest among students whose parents are just above the threshold for payment." Universities face continuing financial problems, in spite of the announcement of a grant increase for 1998-99. The finance directors' projections would wipe out £20 million of their expected budget rise. The university guide will appear throughout this week in *The Times*. The five-day series will include this year's edition of the university league tables, as well as separate rankings for 23 different subjects.

DTI does not want Robinson

Continued from page 1 Robinson's allies to dismiss Mr Scholar's intervention because he has won immense respect throughout Whitehall during a glittering 28-year civil service career. Mr Scholar, 50, joined the Treasury in 1969 after a brief career as an academic at Harvard and Cambridge. He has served in three government departments and gained experience of business during a secondment to Barclays Bank International in the late 1970s. But Mr Scholar may face an uncomfortable week after the disclosure of his intervention because Mr Robinson has powerful friends in Government, not least the Chancellor.

It is understood that Mr Scholar tempered his warning by praising Mr Robinson's work at the Treasury, especially in reaching a deal between the electricity generating companies and the coal industry which involved close co-operation with the DTI. The Permanent Secretary has also made clear that he has nothing against multimillionaire businessmen in general. He has gone out of his way to praise Lord Simon of Highbury, the former chairman of BP, who faced embarrassment himself last summer over his share dealings. The Whitehall source said: "The DTI has a very high regard for Lord Simon. But he

is very different to Geoffrey Robinson. Lord Simon joined BP from university and worked his way up to the top of one company." Mr Blair is said to be determined to move Mr Robinson in his first ministerial reshuffle, in spite of strong lobbying from the Chancellor for him to remain at the Treasury. If he is not transferred to the DTI, it has been suggested that he could succeed Gavin Strang as Transport Minister, with the post being taken out of the Cabinet. Recently Mr Robinson has worked with John Prescott on plans to work with the private sector to attract £7 billion to London Underground.

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M1 alert over lorry that could not slow down

BY ANNIE FLURY

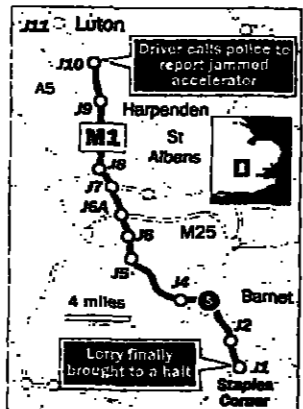
A LORRY driver called police on his mobile phone to report an emergency: he was travelling along the M1 and his accelerator was stuck.

Five police cars formed an escort for Michael Rayner, 26, clearing motorists from the path of his 38-tonne articulated tipper truck as it weaved between southbound traffic at over 80mph. The drama intensified when police realised the motorway was running out and he was heading for a busy roundabout.

Finally he turned off the engine and steered into the crash barrier by the hard shoulder, narrowly missing a family in a car who had pulled over thinking the flashing blue lights on the police cars were ordering them to stop. The lorry ploughed on 100 yards through the barrier before coming to a stop near Scratchwood Service Station.

Mr Rayner, from Potters Bar, Hertfordshire, escaped uninjured. Last night he said: "It was a bit frightening, but the police were brilliant." He had contacted the police when he realised the accelerator pedal had jammed just after he turned onto the M1 southbound carriageway at Junction 10. Five patrol cars were sent to escort him, and a police helicopter monitored the situation from overhead.

He said: "The police had caught up with me by Junction 8. They just got everything off the road for me. I was in the fast lane, on the hard shoulder, anywhere I could get through. At the same time they were talking to me advising me. Then they told me I



had about a mile of motorway left before it finished and there was some sort of roundabout. I decided I should get onto the hard shoulder and turn the engine off. The only trouble was a car had pulled over onto the hard shoulder after seeing a police car signalling him and assuming it wanted him to stop.

"I could see the car in my path and I could see one or two children inside and that's why I had to steer it into the crash barrier. Mind you, when the driver saw me approaching from behind he was off like a shot. Luckily the lorry didn't jackknife because it probably would have overturned."

He had realised that his accelerator had jammed only after he drove on to the motorway at 10.50am. He dialed 999 on his mobile telephone and stayed on the line giving a running commentary to officers during the 20-minute emergency.

Jerry Bartlett, an acting duty inspector at Hertfordshire Police, said: "All of a sudden we got this call

through from the driver saying that his accelerator was stuck. With a vehicle that size, there is no way you can box them in and just try to slow them down as you can do with a car. We just had to try and clear a path for him, although if there'd been a traffic jam of any kind then God only knows what would have happened.

"It was extremely tense to say the least. None of us had dealt with anything like this before and we knew we only had a limited amount of time. At first we suggested he switched his engine off, but he was worried he would lose the power steering and possibly lost control of the vehicle.

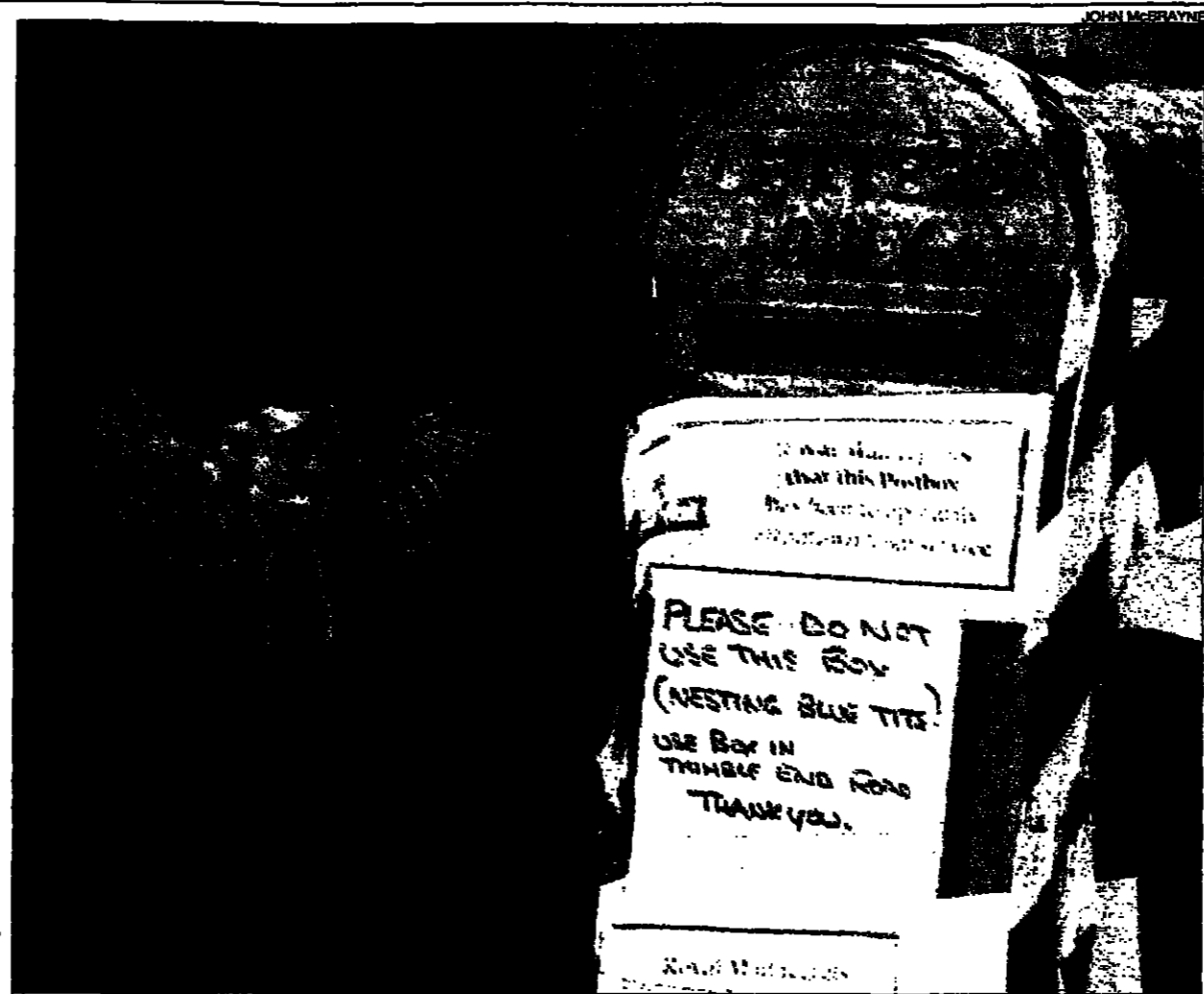
"There was some problem with his brakes not being effective and for some reason he couldn't use the gears to slow down.

"It was just getting towards the end of the motorway where there's a hill leading down to a roundabout called Staples Corner. The fear was that if he started down the hill he would pick up even more speed.

"The roundabout is normally very busy, and what would have happened if he'd hit that doesn't bear thinking about.

"At the end of the day, we were simply running out of motorway so he had no choice but to switch the engine off, and then go straight into the crash barrier on the near side."

Praising Mr Rayner, the inspector said: "It was down to his expertise and his bravery. He sounded quite calm, but listening to him at the station you could hear the tension in his voice. He was extremely relieved afterwards."



Cooke 'lives in fear for his life'

BY STEPHEN FARRELL

SIDNEY COOKE, the paedophile whose release last month provoked a riot, lives in constant fear of retribution, the policeman responsible for guarding him reveals tonight.

Cooke, 71, lives in voluntary custody under police protection in the West Country after serving a nine-year sentence for killing Jason Swift, a 14-year-old runaway.

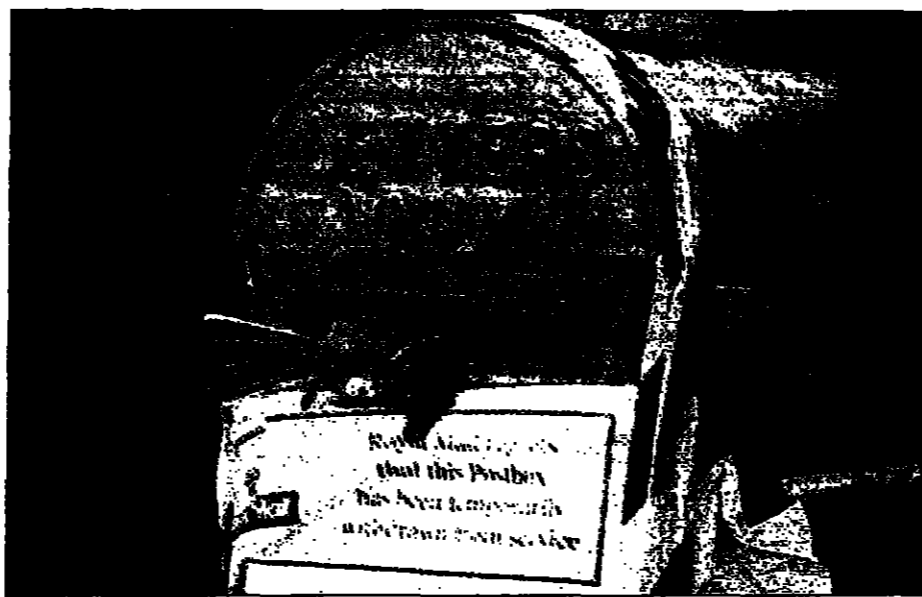
Detective Superintendent David Edwards, of Avon and Somerset police, says Cooke is acutely aware of public hostility that led to demonstrations outside police stations in Bristol and Yeovil, where he was rumoured to be staying. That followed similar protests in East London.

"He certainly does not want to face the public. He is very well aware of the public reaction to him and is in some fear of that," Mr Edwards tells *Panorama*. "He spends a lot of his time watching television, he reads the papers. He cleans his accommodation, he sends out for food, he has his own money."

Cooke has been warned that his life is in danger unless he agrees to stay in custody until his long-term future is settled. Mr Edwards promises that, if Cooke does decide to leave, police will "react accordingly" to ensure public safety. "If necessary, we can also put a policeman with him 24 hours a day. In practice, he has nowhere else to go."

Probation workers considered putting Cooke in a Bristol bail hostel and discussed other options such as surveillance, tagging and police escorts.

Mr Edwards says: "If a person serves their term of imprisonment, then surely it is incumbent on society to make every attempt to rehabilitate him this person, to rehabilitate and to absorb him into society."



Air male stays at his post

A tit arriving at its new nesting site — a postbox at Walmley, West Midlands. Collections have been postponed for about a month to give seven chicks a chance to hatch and fly. Tony Howell, 41, the local postman said: "People had been posting letters but the birds had just carried on nest-building." He said that the warning notice will be amended — the birds are great tits, not blue tits.

Birdsong secrets, page 15

Marrying types broke rules

BY ANNIE FLURY

IT WAS almost four weddings and a court case for a romantic couple who risked jail to keep getting married to each other.

Jimmy and Greta Wardle, both 63, who live in West Monkseaton, North Tyneside, enjoyed the ceremony so much that they married three times and were about to go through a fourth one when they were rumbled. Undeterred by the threat of a prosecution for perjury, they had given false addresses to conceal their married status.

The Wardles first tied the knot at Beamish Parish Church, Co Durham, in 1978, legally becoming man and wife. Not content with one walk up the aisle, they decided to do it all again on June 3, 1995, at St Paul's Church, Whiteley Bay. The bride used the surname Croft, wore a

flowing white dress and arrived in a Rolls.

Wedding number three came two years later, last June 14, at the Methodist church 200 yards away. Mrs Wardle wore white again, arriving this time in a vintage Bentley, where Jimmy, a former bus garage labourer was waiting eagerly with the rings. Again they claimed to be single and were surrounded by family and friends who had been told the couple were having their marriage blessed.

Their fourth wedding was to have taken place at West Avenue Methodist Church, Gosforth, next month. A disappointed Mrs Wardle, a retired school domestic worker, said: "This was going to be the last time. We didn't want anyone to stop the wedding." Her husband added: "We switch churches so they don't find out. It is not barmy anyone."

Church leaders have been sympathetic and offered to give the couple a blessing instead. Terry Hurst, a Methodist superintendent minister, said: "I'd be happy to allow them to renew their vows."

Mary Longley, Newcastle's superintendent registrar, said: "I doubt if the police would want to prosecute them: it is quite romantic really." A spokesman for the General Register Office said the couple could have continued to marry again and again without breaking the law, had they disclosed that they had been married before.

The couple's fourth wedding plans were abandoned after a local newspaper reporter decided that a couple in their sixties marrying for the first time would make a happy story. When he went to visit the couple, neighbours told him that they had actually been married for years.

Awayday to fix fund's future

BY ANDREW PIERCE
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE trustees of the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund are to hold a secret strategy meeting which could lead to a timescale for the charity being wound-up.

The "awayday" conference is to be held at an undisclosed location. It comes only weeks after *The Times* reported that Earl Spencer had written to the trustees urging them to close down the charity.

The trustees will also address the complex issue of whether to give away all the money to good causes — the fund is expected to have received £100 million by the end

of the year — or invest the capital and spend the interest. Opinions are divided among the nine trustees, who include Lady Sarah McCorquodale, Diana's sister.

The fund is under pressure to decide whether to embark on an aggressive fundraising campaign or to continue to take donations from the public.

Earl Spencer wrote to all trustees challenging them to fix a date to stop taking donations and to give away the money which had been collected so far. He believes the charity is tasteless and degrading the memory of his late sister. He lost his patience when he discovered

tubs of margarine on supermarket shelves emblazoned with his sister's distinctive looping signature.

The fund has collected £41 million and given away only £7 million. The money is pouring in at the rate of £1 million a week.

The trustees said that the awayday had been arranged long before Earl Spencer expressed concerns about the fund's operation at the end of last month. Vivienne Parry, one of the trustees, said: "We always said that we wanted to have some time when we could go off and talk about various things."

"We have regular meetings, but we have had so much

business to deal with that we have not had a chance to discuss long term issues."

But the Whitehall source said that the meeting was an acknowledgement that the charity's public relations had been disastrous. "This awayday is designed to give the fund a proper focus which it seriously lacks. It is a concession and admission they have lacked a clear set of goals."

"They will decide their future intentions: how long will they go on how long they will continue fundraising and whether there should be any more product endorsements." The fund has a new London headquarters.

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Labour conceals how taxes hit family budgets

Andrew Pierce on allegations of abuse of power

THE Treasury has suspended, for the first time in nearly two decades, the publication of figures that show how the tax burden on households rises or falls.

The statistics were used by Labour in opposition to demonstrate how overall taxation rose under the Tories, despite successive income tax cuts, because of increased VAT and indirect tax.

Treasury officials said yesterday that abandoning making the figures available was not a cover-up. Ministers wanted to find a more "meaningful and reliable" system.

The figures had been published since 1981, when they were asked for by Jack Straw, now Home Secretary but then a junior economics spokesman. The change of policy is revealed in written answers to Malcolm Bruce, the Liberal Democrat treasury spokesman, from Dawn Primarolo, Financial Secretary to the Treasury. It comes after two

Budgets in which mortgage tax relief has been cut and the duty on fuel, tobacco and alcohol have risen sharply, and also follows council tax increases above the rate of inflation.

On VAT, Ms Primarolo wrote: "Further consideration is being given to whether the information provided is typical of families in the UK." On indirect taxes, she said: "Estimating [their] impact is imprecise as spending patterns vary widely between households with the same composition and income." On withholding council-tax figures: "The level... will also vary, depending on where families live."

The Liberal Democrats suspect that the change is not to improve the flow of information but because the tax burden has fallen hardest on the low-paid. The latest information from the House of Commons shows that the poorest 20 per cent of the population paid a bigger share of their

income tax in 1996-97 than the richest 20 per cent. In 1979, the poorest paid 31 per cent tax and the richest 37 per cent.

Mr Bruce said: "This cover-up by Gordon Brown is a disgrace. For years Labour has been using these figures on the tax burden to expose the truth about tax rises. Now, with Labour in power, Mr Brown has decided that he does not want to be judged by the yardsticks which he applied to the Tories, so instead of tackling the underlying issues he has just abolished the statistics."

"This is an abuse of government power, and an abuse of the independence of the Civil Service, who have a key role in telling ministers where to get off when they try to engineer these sorts of cover-ups."

The Liberal Democrats are writing to Sir Richard Wilson, the Head of the Civil Service, and Sir Terence Burns, the Permanent Secretary at the Treasury, to protest.

MP insists he can work well from Hong Kong

By Andrew Pierce
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

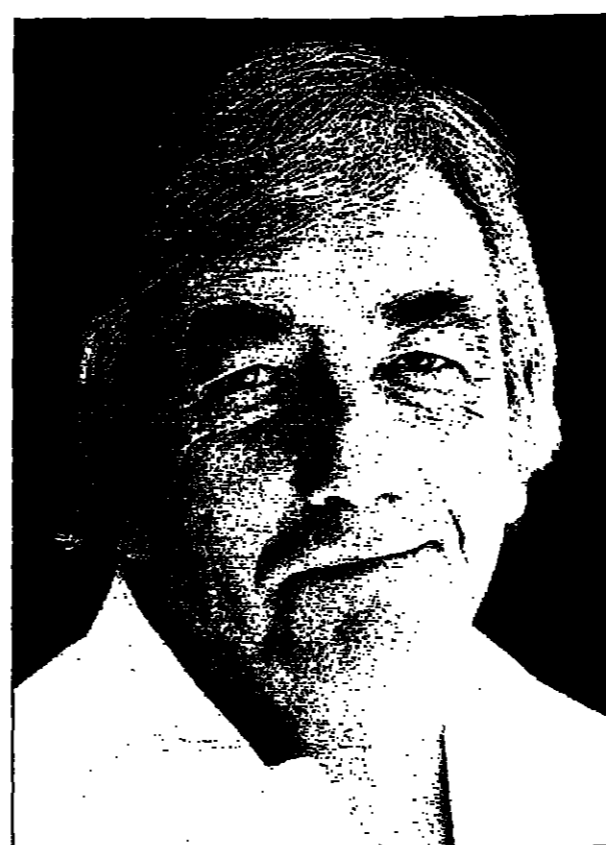
A BARRISTER Labour MP who is on a month's paid leave in Hong Kong for a lucrative court case, insisted yesterday that he was in the best place to represent the interests of his constituents.

Robert Marshall-Andrews, who refused to deny that he was being paid £15,000 for the legal work, is staying in the £300-a-night Island Shangri-La hotel. The Hong Kong Government is paying the bill at the hotel, which was voted the best in Asia in a magazine poll.

Government whips approved the paid leave for Mr Marshall-Andrews, MP for Medway, who spends an average of two days a week away from Westminster on private legal work.

The MP, speaking from his hotel room, said last night: "This is not a holiday. It is hard work. I am keeping in regular touch with my constituency."

"The hotel is very nice, it is true, but it happens to be the



Marshall-Andrews: "outside professional interests"

closest one to the court-house." Mr Marshall-Andrews, who has been in Hong Kong for one week, is planning to fly his wife to Hong Kong to join him for a weekend.

He was chosen by the Hong Kong Government to prosecute a lawyer in the former colony because he has

worked there before. "I believe that it is right that MPs have outside professional interests. By being in Hong Kong I am being of more value to my constituents because it shows that I am a senior practising lawyer with detailed knowledge of the law. This enables me to keep in touch with real life."

Parents facing jail in campaign against truancy

By Valerie Elliott and Andrew Pierce

PARENTS face the prospect of jail if they allow their children to persistently play truant under plans to be unveiled by Downing Street today.

The police will also be given powers to arrest children discovered on the streets who refuse to go to school. A consultation paper will be published by the Government in the summer which will canvass opinion about the level of sanctions that should be imposed on parents.

Tony Blair will today emphasise the role of responsible parents in ensuring their children attend school regularly. He will reveal details of new parenting orders as a first step to tackling truancy and expulsions from school.

The target will be to reduce the number of children playing truant by one third within the next four years. Bringing parents before the courts will be the most crucial of the 29 recommendations in today's report from the Social Exclusion Unit. Courts will be able to impose penalties such as ordering parents to accompany their children to schools for up to a full school year if necessary. Parents will also have to sign themselves in as with a probation order.

Almost one million children played truant in 1996, 15 per cent of the school population. The rising numbers led to 100,000 children being excluded temporarily from schools, with 13,000 expelled permanently. Under current legisla-

tion parents of truants face fines of up to £1,000.

Ministers recognise that some parents have difficulties in controlling children who might be violent as well as disruptive and disobedient. Research for today's report showed, however, that 44 per cent of truants believed their parents knew they were missing school.

Peter Mandelson, Minister without Portfolio and tipped for promotion to the Cabinet later this month, hints at the need for tougher action against some parents in an article in *The Times* today.

"Parents will have to live up to their responsibility to make children go to school, with parenting orders as a sanction for those who don't," he writes. "That means courts ordering parents to do all the things a reasonable parent should do like ensuring their children attend school. Like all court orders, if it is not fulfilled then children can be taken back to court."

The extra powers for the police to pick up truants and return them to school will be introduced as an amendment to the Crime and Disorder Bill, currently completing its final stages through Parliament.

Schools are also to be given extra cash if they work out new solutions that keep unruly and disobedient children inside schools.

Peter Mandelson, page 20

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Passports to change again to foil forgers

By Richard Ford, Home Correspondent

THE EU-style British passport is to be scrapped in its present form because it is too easy to forge for use by bogus asylum-seekers and illegal immigrants.

The photograph and personal data are to be moved from the inside back cover to an inside page made of thin paper in the hope that alterations will be easier to spot.

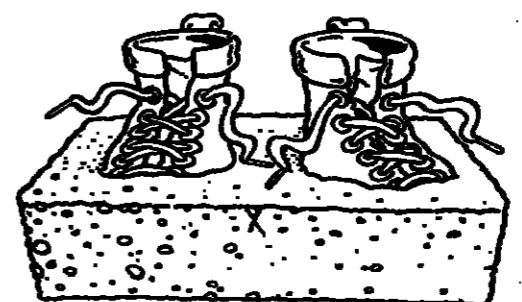
Home Office officials have agreed the move just ten years after the phasing in of the soft-covered machine-readable travel document. Immigration officers said the document was causing serious problems at ports and airports. Forgers find it easy to remove the plastic covering the photo, slide out the picture and replace it with a slightly larger one to cover the damage.

Anti-forgery experts hope that it will be easier to identify changes to the name and date of birth listed next to the photograph if the page is made of thin paper. Immigration officers at Heathrow's Terminal 4 reported 534 incidents last year in which travel documents had been tampered with. Of those, 191 had substitute photographs and 67 forged entry stamps or visas. The UK passport was the most forged travel document found in Terminal 4 followed by those from Pakistan, The Netherlands, Italy, Belgium, Nigeria and Canada.

Immigration officers at Heathrow's Terminal 4 reported 534 incidents last year in which travel documents had been tampered with. Of those, 191 had substitute photographs and 67 forged entry stamps or visas. The UK passport was the most forged travel document found in Terminal 4 followed by those from Pakistan, The Netherlands, Italy, Belgium, Nigeria and Canada.

The passport change is one of a series of measures being taken to combat the use of false documents. The results of a pilot project using closed-circuit cameras to monitor passengers at Heathrow are expected to go to ministers shortly with a recommendation that the system be expanded. A mobile surveillance team has also been set up at Heathrow.

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BBC claims backing for Radio 4 changes

BY CAROL MIDGLEY, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

RADIO 4 listeners who approve of the changes to its schedule outnumber those who dislike them by two to one, the BBC claimed yesterday. But *Feedback*, the programme that is the station's sounding board, said that 90 per cent of the letters it was receiving on the subject expressed opposition to the revamp.

One common gripe was about the number of trailers broadcast, often accompanied by "inane muzak". One complainant said that Radio 4 was behaving like a commercial station.

Caroline Elliot, network manager of Radio 4, denied that more time was being given to promotions but said shorter trailers were being used more often. Music was used, she said, to capture people's imaginations.

James Boyle, the Radio 4 Controller, introduced the changes in April in an attempt to halt the station's decline and win a bigger audience.

Another area of contention is the longer, three-hour *Today* programme, which many listeners and newspaper critics have found frothy and flabby. Others simply do not like the new programmes or the new timings.

Nick Utechin, producer of *Feedback*, which itself has been moved to Friday afternoons, said: "Of the letters we have had, and there have been hundreds, the ratio is about nine to one against the changes. Even those in favour usually have a sting in the tail. They have been bemoan-

ing a lot of things, from *The World at One* being shortened to the later scheduling of *The Archers*. Some people do not like the new quiz programmes. But we have to put this in context. The people who write to *Feedback* are more likely to be those with something to complain about, whereas if they like something they might write to the broadcaster."

A BBC spokeswoman said that research carried out at Broadcasting House indicated that early reaction had been positive. Just over 1,000 people were telephoned randomly for the survey last month. Of those, 150 were regular listeners of Radio 4 who had heard about the changes and expressed an opinion: 36 per cent of them liked the changes, 16 per cent disapproved, and 48 per cent had mixed feelings.

A BBC spokeswoman said: "A lot of people thought there was more variety now and that it made a refreshing change. Those who didn't like the changes objected to timing issues such as *The World at One* and *The World this Weekend* being shorter. But we have to let the new schedules settle in."

Jocelyn Hay, chairman of the Voice of the Listener and Viewer, said there had been a mixed reaction so far. But she said the weekend schedule had raised some questions. Many listeners have found the earlier timing of *Sunday Worship* inconvenient.

Leading article, page 21

News from the front runs a little late

BY JOHN SHAW

TWO boxes of scripts from BBC wartime radio news broadcasts are to be sold at auction tomorrow.

They cover some of the main turning points of the Second World War but only a handful of the programmes were ever recorded, according to the National Sound Archive. The scripts, which are expected to fetch £500 at Bonhams in Knightsbridge, were discovered during the clear-out of a BBC building in London.

The programmes were broadcast on the Home Ser-

vice and *Light* programmes from 1940-42 and 1945. Crucial events covered include the sinking of the *Bismark*, the Russian advance in Manchuria and the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Military progress is offset by news of the 1945 election and domestic items including cricket scores.

Jason Waldron, 26, a former soldier from Faversham, Kent, who bought the boxes for £45 at a local auction, said: "When I got home it was just like reading history."



Newton: duty-bound

Publisher wins fight to save cliff cottages

BY HELEN JOHNSTONE

A PUBLISHER has saved an historic row of cottages on one of Britain's most picturesque coastlines from tumbling into the sea despite a call from conservationists that nature be allowed to take its course.

Nigel Newton, who was born in San Francisco, said his family fell in love with the cottages as soon as they set foot in one of them. Mr Newton, 42, who bought the former coastguard's cottage as a holiday home, has been



The cottages above Cuckmere Haven that have been saved from the sea, despite lobbying from conservationists to let nature run its course

given permission to spend £25,000 to strengthen sea defences.

Mr Newton is the founder and managing director of Bloomsbury Publishing, whose authors include John

Irving and Michael Ondaatje, has been at odds with conservationists for almost a year. Paul Walton, area manager of the Sussex Downs Conservation Board, said: "It is our view that the

coastline is of such natural importance it should not be tampered with."

Mr Newton said: "When I bought the cottage I, along with my neighbours, were very aware that as custodians

of these homes it was our duty to protect them for others to enjoy." They have already spent more than £20,000 and have just secured planning permission from Lewes District Council for a 75 ft rock

revetment. Mr Newton has agreed to pay £25,000 for further work to be carried out. He said yesterday: "I feel I have done my part in preserving the cliffs and these cottages for a few more years."



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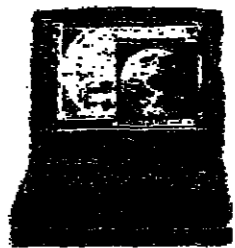
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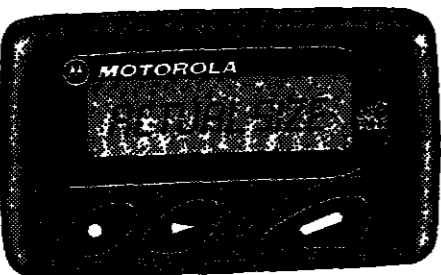
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6 HOME NEWS

Beckett battles to avert mutiny on paper prices

By Jill Sherman and Raymond Snoddy

THE Government will today try to head off a damaging rebellion on its Competition Bill by assuring MPs that the new laws will stop predatory pricing by newspapers.

Margaret Beckett, the President of the Board of Trade, will make clear during the Bill's Second Reading that the Government intends to overturn a Lords amendment, tabled by the Liberal Democrat Lord McNally, that bans price-cutting by newspapers.

Today is the first chance for MPs to speak on the issue after the Government was defeated in the Lords in February. Several MPs are suspicious of the apparently close relations between Tony Blair and Rupert Murdoch, chairman and chief executive of The News Corporation, parent company of *The Times*.

Mrs Beckett, who has had a series of meetings with potential rebels during the past few days, will emphasise that the Bill as it stands — without the Lords' amendment — is much tougher than previously thought. She and her colleagues have drawn attention to the little-noted Clause 60, which enshrines European jurisprudence into British law.

Under this clause Britain will have to accept a recent ruling in Europe — the Tetra

Pak judgment — that limits price-cutting by insisting that any dominant company in the market that consistently lowered its prices below its average variable costs would be in breach of the law.

There is unlikely to be a big rebellion today but several MPs are threatening to revolt during later stages of the Bill. One of those is Chris Mullin, Labour MP for Sunderland South, the rebels' leader, who is considering tabling his own amendment to ban newspaper price-cutting. He has been consulting newspaper groups, including those of *The Guardian* and *The Daily Telegraph*, over a form of words that could win widespread support.

The Tories are expected to vote against the Government on the Second Reading but will abstain on, or vote against, Lord McNally's amendment, which will be debated at a later stage.

The Times has always denied that its price-cutting policy amounted to predatory pricing — a view that has been upheld by the Office of Fair Trading three times. Predatory pricing is usually seen as behaviour designed to drive an identified competitor out of business with the intention of imposing monopoly prices later.

er. *The Times* has always argued that its price-cutting is a permanent feature of its sales and promotion policy. The aim is to increase advertising revenue on the back of an increased circulation.

In an article for *The Guardian* last month, Leslie Hinton, executive chairman of News International, a subsidiary of The News Corporation which owns *Times Newspapers Holdings*, said that "competitive pricing" would remain a key part of the newspaper's commercial policy.

"We understand that big financial success comes from advertising, that advertisers love young readers, and that young readers love a bargain price," Mr Hinton wrote in the article.

In March John Bridgeman, the Director-General of the Office of Fair Trading, asked *The Independent*, *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Guardian* to supply more information in support of their complaint about the pricing policy of *The Times*.

"In the past we have dismissed other claims of predatory pricing, but the issue continues to cause concern to broadsheets who are particularly aggrieved at *The Times*' price policy," Mr Bridgeman said.



Tim Mallen will show EU agriculture ministers the electronic tagging system for cattle introduced at Hulne Park Farm on Alnwick Castle's estate

Duke cuts the mustard for EU offensive

By Michael Hornsby
AGRICULTURE
CORRESPONDENT

JACK CUNNINGHAM, the Agriculture Minister, is pulling out all the cultural and culinary stops to persuade the rest of the European Union

that it is time to lift the ban on British beef.

When Tony Blair wanted to impress President Chirac, he took him to the top of Canary Wharf and showed him the rebuilt Docklands.

Dr Cunningham has turned to old money, and one of

Britain's grandest aristocratic landowners, to help him to cut a dash before fellow agriculture ministers from the 14 other member states of the European Union.

The three-day informal gathering, in which ministers are accompanied by their spouses on an outing that is as much a social as a political event, is a ritual staged twice a year in the country then holding the EU's six-month presidency. Dr Cunningham, a 58-year-old Geordie with a doctorate in chemistry from Durham University, has followed tradition in using the occasion to show off the historical and other attractions of the region from which the host minister hails.

Yesterday evening, the EU ministers attended a choral recital in the Norman splendour of Durham Cathedral, watched the band of the Durham Light Infantry beat retreat on Palace Green, and dined on Tweed salmon and Kielder Forest venison in Durham Castle.

The highlight of the visit comes today with a lunch at Alnwick Castle, the seat of the 12th Duke of Northumberland, whose family, the Percys, have owned it since 1309. The castle stands on a promontory overlooking the River Aln some 20 miles north of Hadrian's Wall.

On the menu will be roast Aberdeen Angus beef — off the bone — from cattle reared on the castle estate, though guests who turn queasy at the mere mention of "mad cow" disease can choose Cumbrian

air-dried ham or game pie instead. To break the ice, the duke will ply his visitors with a throat-tinging aperitif known as a "Perry Special", which family insiders describe as "a potent mixture of whiskey and cherry brandy usually served during the shooting season".

An extra lethal version is likely to be mixed for Jochen Borchert, the dour German Agriculture Minister, who is regarded as the biggest

duke's farms manager, is keen to show off the latest technology, introduced 18 months ago.

"All cattle are now fitted with an electronic ear-tag which carries a unique identity number and other information," he said. "The tags can be read by a scanner, enabling us to provide a record of every animal from birth to slaughterhouse."

The ministers will be given an audio-visual presentation on the new computerised cattle-tracing system that Dr Cunningham hopes to have operating throughout Britain from September.

Tonight the assault on continental taste buds will continue at a gala dinner in the civic centre in Newcastle, where the visitors are staying in a quayside hotel. The fare will include seafood served with stotty cakes (a Geordie bread speciality), Northumberland spring lamb glazed with Lindisfarne mead mustard, and Newcastle Pudding, a lemon-flavoured bread and butter concoction. Isle of Mull Cheddar — and Newcastle Brown Ale.

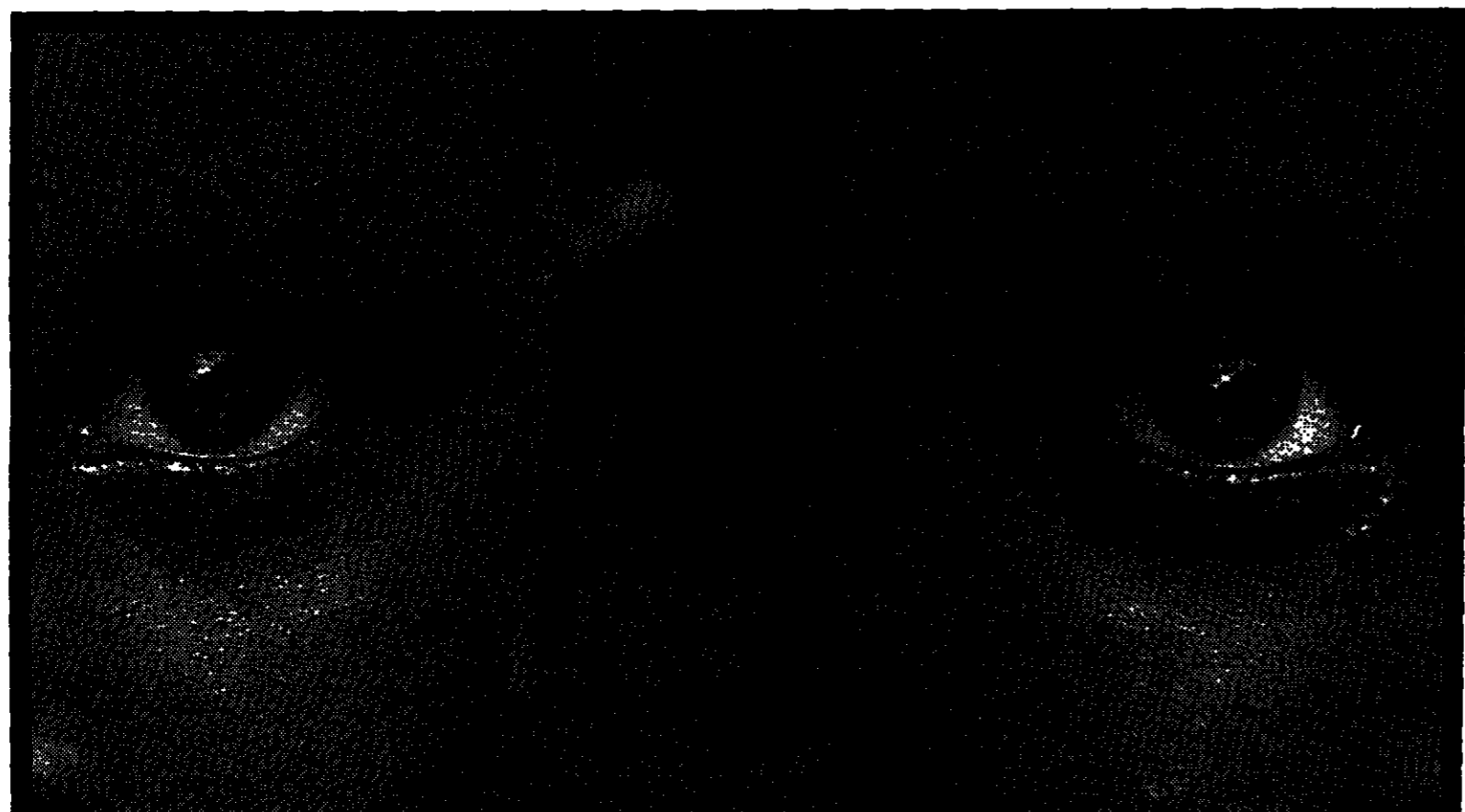
Lord Donoghue, the junior Agriculture Minister responsible for the food industry, said he was confident that the visiting EU ministers would be impressed. "In the past British food has suffered from something of an image problem," he said. "But it has undergone a transformation in recent years and many chefs are now presenting the best of traditional flavours with a modern edge."



At home: the 12th Duke of Northumberland

obstacle to the removal of the beef export ban imposed more than two years ago.

Before lunch, the visitors, among them Franz Fischler, the EU Agriculture Commissioner, who is seen as an important ally by Britain, will inspect a high-tech beef farming enterprise at the 1,800-acre Hulne Park Farm, part of the castle estate. Tim Mallen, the



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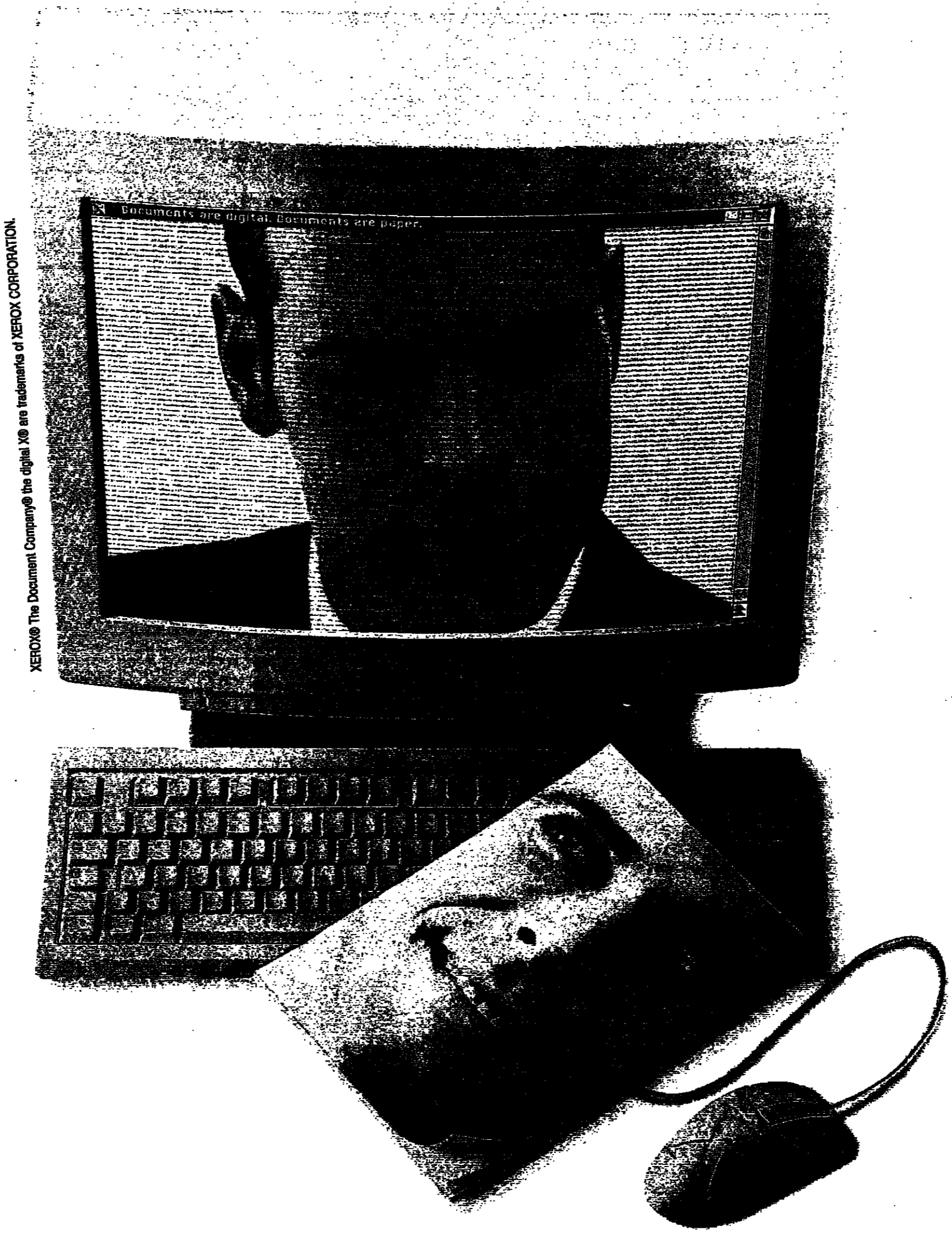
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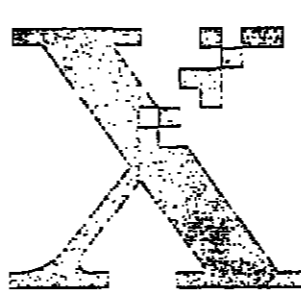


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Britons lead the world in living to the age of 50

BRITAIN has come out on top in a survey of the proportion of people who survive to the age of 50.

No other country except Sweden can match the British figures, which show that 19 out of 20 people live to celebrate their half-century.

The statistics are a surprise because Britain's gross national product per head is less than that of many other developed countries and much less is spent per head on health care.

On most criteria — infant mortality, life expectancy and death below the age of five — Britain does well but is bettered by the Scandinavian countries, Switzerland, Japan and The Netherlands.

The figures appear in the World Health Organisation's World Health Report, published today as the World Health Assembly, WHO's governing body, convenes in Geneva for its annual meeting.

This year's report includes deaths below 50 as a separate category for the first time.

Britain's top placing is a combination of good healthcare and a low accident rate.

In France, by comparison, 8,000 people a year die in motor vehicle accidents, against 3,600 in Britain. Road deaths are lower in Britain now than they were in 1926 — the first year that statistics were gathered — even though there are more than 30 times as many vehicles.

Since many of those who die in accidents are under 50, the accident figures have a substantial impact on the overall result. The report shows that

Spending less per head than other countries, the NHS gives good value, reports Nigel Hawkes

last year deaths under the age of 50 were twice as high in France as in Britain, three times as high in Poland, and four times as high in Russia.

Most European countries do nearly as well as Britain, with only 6 or 7 per cent of people dying before the age of 50. But in the developing world a very different picture emerges.

Throughout Africa between 50 and 80 per cent die before the age of 50, while in the Americas the figure is as low as 9 per cent in Barbados, and as high as 62 per cent in Nicaragua. In the Middle East the figures range between 30 and 50 per cent.

"Britain is doing incredibly well," Karol Sikora, chairman of the WHO programme on cancer control, said. "If you look at Britain's GNP, and at the relatively small proportion of it we spend on health services, the NHS is giving incredible value for money."

In an upbeat assessment, the report also says that the world is set for an era of improving health, increasing lifespan and declining infant mortality. Increasing global

prosperity, healthier lifestyles, better education and rapid medical advances are set to transform the global community by 2025.

In Britain, life expectancy will rise to more than 80, with those dying before the age of 50 falling to 3 per cent. In the world as a whole, life expectancy — which was 48 in 1955 and is now 65 — will reach 73 by 2025. Even the poorest countries should have a life expectancy of 65 by then.

Reaching the age of 100 will become commonplace in the next century. In France, for example, there were 200 centenarians in 1950, but there are expected to be 150,000 by 2050.

Infectious diseases are declining as a cause of death, although they remain important in poorer countries. Smallpox has been eradicated, and polio and leprosy are close to eradication. But malaria and tuberculosis remain a major threat, killing 5.5 million people a year between them.

As wealth spreads across the world, so do the diseases associated with it — heart disease and cancer. "Smoking is increasing in developing countries and diets are changing from poor but healthy ones to those based on Western branded foods," Professor Sikora said.

There is also, he says, an alarming increase in obesity. Despite the generally optimistic tone of the report, huge inequities remain, both between countries and within them.

For many Africans, prospects remain bleak. Hiroshi Nakajima, the WHO's director general, said: "The prime concern of the international community must be the plight of those most likely to be left furthest behind.

"These are the many hundreds of millions of men, women and children still trapped in the past by the grimmest poverty. They live mainly in the least-developed countries, where the burdens of ill-health, disease and inequality are heaviest, the outlook is bleakest, and life is shortest."



Stranded whales show species is recovering

The large number of sperm whales becoming marooned around the British coast could be a sign that the species is recovering after the end of hunting in the 1970s (Nick Nuttall writes). Findings by British and Dutch scientists challenge environmentalists' claims that the many strandings in recent years are linked to man-made ills such as overfishing, global warming and pollution. It seems that there are more sperm whales than before in the North Sea

and that they occasionally get stuck in coastal waters. The researchers analysed records of beached whales going back to the 16th century. Chris Smeenk, of the Natural History Museum in Leiden, found that in certain years there were an unusually large number of strandings. Peter Evans, of Oxford University, said that periods when there were few strandings

were those when hunting had curbed whale numbers. Dr Evans coordinates the Sea Watch Foundation, whose volunteers record whale sightings. He said there was evidence that dead whales had absorbed high levels of pollution. The end of hunting had led to more competition between male whales, with those who headed north finding food scarce in winter. He and Dr Smeenk suspect that young males swim into coastal waters in search of food.

Scare stories 'threaten free enterprise'

BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

PEOPLE are being bombarded with exaggerated scare stories about products including baby milk, cigarettes and breast implants, a report published today says.

The allegations, often unjustified, amount to an attack on private enterprise, say Dr Mark Neal and Christie Davies of Reading University. They lead to unnecessary regulations and costs, without an opportunity to appeal if the scare turns out to have been unjustified, they say in The Corporation under Siege, published by the Social Affairs

Unit. For a small company the result can be bankruptcy, or unemployment for its workers, they argue. For its customers it means paying more for a product, or being denied it altogether. "The use of health, safety, or green devices to malign or ban a product can mean ruin for the victims."

Once only the pharmaceutical, drinks and tobacco industries were the targets. Now the list includes food, farming, forestry, mining, water, chemicals, toys and tampons, they say. Environmental organisations, which start many of

the scares, are not "simply indulging in the cynical and mendacious manipulation of public opinion", the authors believe. "Rather, there is every reason to believe that they believe their own nonsense."

The authors allege that activists are aided by journalists and television companies publishing their claims uncritically, and by bureaucrats who impose tough regulations even when the evidence to justify them has not been provided.

Examples cited include scares over silicone breast implants, residues in drinking

water, gun control after Dunblane, passive smoking and drug side-effects.

Techniques used in making allegations include:

- Exaggeration. Even when claims are later scaled down, some of the mud sticks. Identifying "clusters" of disease and blaming environmental causes. "In reality, clusters occur naturally and are not in themselves evidence of a health or environmental problem." Mistaking coincidence for causality. Ignoring real levels of risk and emphasising relative risks, which sound more dramatic. Claiming that small amounts of a substance are dangerous because large amounts are. Ignoring the pleasure and benefit of a product and emphasising the harm it causes — commonly used of tobacco, alcohol, cars, fireworks and food. The Corporation under Siege (published by the Social Affairs Unit, 314-322 Regent Street, London W1R 5AB, £9.95 plus £1.50 p&p)

HEALTH OF THE NATIONS. Table with 4 columns: Deaths under the age of 50 as percentage of total, TOP COUNTRIES, BOTTOM COUNTRIES, and values for various countries like Britain, Sweden, Belgium, etc.

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The whispered deals by Voice of Swimming

THE financial activities of Hamilton Bland, the BBC swimming commentator, have been a tragedy for the sport, according to an independent inquiry. He accepted secret commissions from a supplier while acting as a paid adviser to local councils, the inquiry is expected to announce today.

The report by Mark Gay, a leading sports lawyer, was ordered by the Amateur Swimming Association last July after an investigation by *The Times* and *ITV's World In Action* showed that Mr Bland had made a fortune from the impoverished amateur sport.

The report, which will be featured by the television programme tonight, clears Mr Bland over his activities concerning the ASA awards and his company SwimGB.

But it says that from Scotland to Wiltshire, Mr Bland brought the Amateur Swimming Association into disrepute by recommending moveable floors for swimming pools while taking secret commissions from the manufacturer. He breached his duty as an independent consultant to local authority clients. He distorted tendering by breaching confidentiality and appears to have extorted money from Hans Mooyer, a disabled Dutchman.

The ASA provided Mr Bland with a useful platform by appointing him as facilities consultant in 1988. Most local authorities and schools considering a pool project would consult the ASA. He had advance notice of projects and was in a strong position to obtain consultancies. This was open to abuse if he used his influence and information for his own gain.

Mr Mooyer, who suffers from rheumatoid arthritis, had watched his Polyfloor workforce in Hertfordshire dwindle to three before Mr Bland agreed to recommend his product as the best on the market, charging 5 per cent commission. "I couldn't really argue because I had no business left to argue. I had no jobs," Mr Mooyer said.

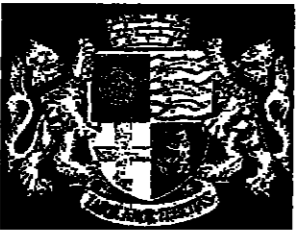
The agreement was that Mr Bland promoted Polyfloor without stating a connection with the company. His clients were not informed and the commission was not included on their invoices. "It is in every sense a secret commission," the report says.

Mr Bland wrote to Mr Mooyer in September 1990: "I would like to propose that I

Inquiry censures Hamilton Bland for cash from pool firm, report Craig Lord and Dominic Kennedy

work with you CLOSELY on EVERY inquiry in order that I can (a) influence the client about the advantages of moveable floors, (b) monitor any competition, and (c) give you much greater exposure - in the best possible way!"

Mr Bland was appointed specialist independent consultant to a project at Richmond, southwest London, for a fee of about £10,000. In a letter to Mr Mooyer, he suggested inflating the price from £177,000 to £185,000 and splitting the difference. The project was aborted. "Had the project



Bland's unregistered coat of arms and motto

proceeded to completion, this would have been a direct fraud on [Mr Bland's] own client," the draft report says.

Mr Bland wrote to Mr Mooyer about the Queen Mother Leisure Centre at Westminster, saying that it would take a lot of work to persuade the Diving Committee, the ASA and Sports Council about the depths of a pool with a moveable floor.

Mr Bland claimed that the managing director of the company running the pool and the regional director of the London Sports Council were his close friends, although he spelt one of their names wrongly. He asked for a commission, saying he was in a position to have an enormous influence on the success of the project.

Mr Bland tried to persuade the ASA's diving secretary that a moveable floor made sense. The official believed

this was impartial advice in the wider interests of swimming. The report suggests that Mr Bland extracted £1,150 from Mr Mooyer for seeking a dispensation from the ASA that was either not required or was easily obtainable. "Mr Bland abused his position within the ASA and the confidence of ASA officials in order to obtain a pecuniary benefit."

At Gordon, in the Borders, Mr Bland was paid a commission of £7,516 after sending a copy of correspondence with the council to Mr Mooyer. Ashfield District Council, Nottinghamshire, has become reluctant to consult the ASA after learning that Mr Bland received a £7,343 commission for apparently impartial advice. At Trowbridge, Wiltshire, where Mr Bland was paid £17,500 as a member of the design team, he told Mr Mooyer's company about an informal, confidential quotation from a rival. Mr Mooyer lowered his tender and won.

In Cumbria and Hull, officials were unaware that Mr Bland had a link with a supplier. At Chicklinin, Shetland, Mr Bland, who had no involvement with the project, exaggerated or pretended to be influential so that he could ask Mr Mooyer for 5 per cent. "The ASA has suffered serious damage to its reputation and standing," the report says. "It has also been the victim of a particularly egregious abuse of position."

Mr Bland also assessed for the ASA applications to the National Lottery for grants for new pools, while privately advising applicants how to apply for lottery money.

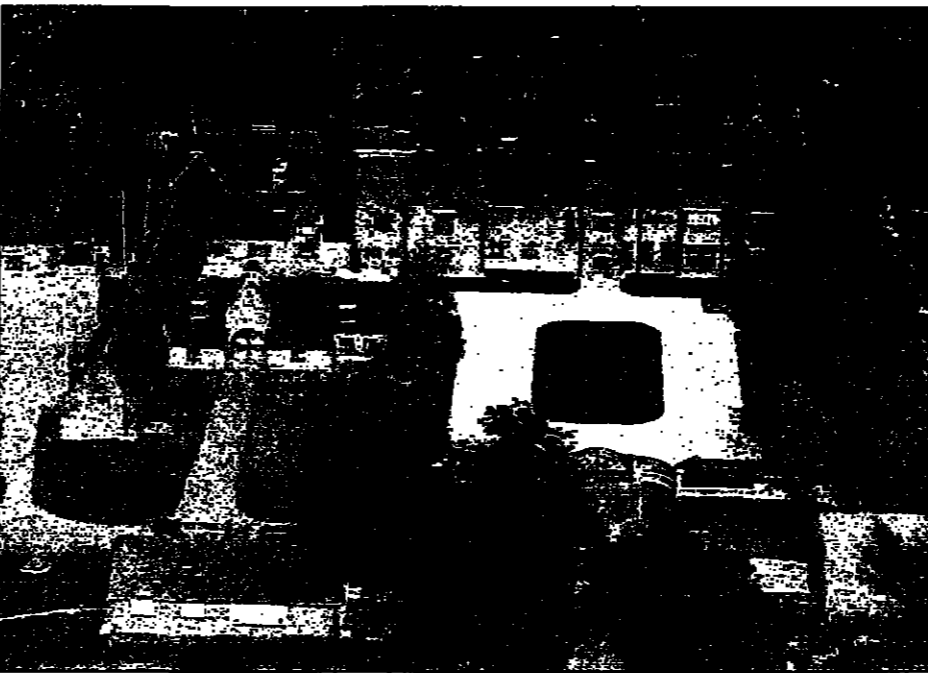
Mr Bland announced his full co-operation with the inquiry but then tried to lay down conditions and would not submit to an interview. Some key documents appeared to have been destroyed or not kept.

As a schoolboy, Mr Bland became Northern Counties Amateur Swimming Association junior 100-yards free-style champion. But when he realised that he would not be an Olympian, he set his sights on coaching.

He studied at the world-renowned sporting University of Loughborough, became a master at Rugby School and left to join the ASA as chief British swimming coach for the Mexico Olympics in 1968. He became the BBC's swimming commentator in 1975, coming to be known as the Voice of Swimming.



Hamilton Bland, a schoolboy champion who became Olympic coach and leading BBC commentator, with young enthusiasts at Birmingham



Honiley Hall, Bland's house at Kenilworth, Warwickshire, cost £500,000

Perceived conflict of interest damaged lottery applications

THE Olympic gold medallist Adrian Moorhouse told the inquiry that Hamilton Bland's perceived conflict of interests damaged the Amateur Swimming Association's influence over how National Lottery money was spent in the sport.

Mr Bland was recruited as a consultant by six organisations bidding for lottery grants for pools. At the same time, his job as facilities consultant for the ASA involved recommending which lottery applications deserved pri-

ority. This advice was passed to the Sports Council, which made the final decision.

In fact, Mr Bland did not comment on his own applications. The Sports Council, though, perceived there was a conflict of interest and became worried about the impartiality of the ASA's advice.

Mr Moorhouse, who was on the English Sports Council's lottery panel, said he largely discounted what the ASA said about applications because of Mr Bland's role. "I knew Blandie would have a

Woman who galvanised sport was edged out

By Craig Lord and Dominic Kennedy

FROM her kitchen table Lily Cook ran the Amateur Swimming Association awards scheme from 1958 to 1991, increasing the number of badges sewn on to children's costumes when they learnt to swim from 8,300 a year to 1,470,000. Her efforts were contributing £240,000 a year to the ASA's finances.

Within weeks of Hamilton Bland becoming interested in her activities, she had retired. In November 1990 Mr Bland proposed a study of the awards scheme for which he required a fee of £5,250 plus VAT.

In a hand-written note in December he asked Miss Cook to provide information. In January 1991 he made a preliminary report of his "in-depth market study". This outlined the research done to date: principally the questions asked of Miss Cook. This, she told the inquiry by Mark Gay, a solicitor, had been a very time-consuming exercise. "It is somewhat ironic," says the draft inquiry report, "that Miss Cook was instrumental in producing an excellent report that ultimately led to her retirement."

Derek Casey, chief executive of the English Sports Council, told the inquiry that the ASA's advice had less weight because of the perceived conflict of interest. The report states: "I consider this is a sad testimony to the erosion of the ASA's influence."

The inquiry expresses surprise that Mr Bland managed to extract a fee of £5,250 from the ASA for an "in-depth study" which was effectively his proposal to take over the awards scheme.

Miss Cook from Woodford Green, North London, decided to retire after 32 years, writing to the ASA: "In a nutshell I feel I have been barnstormed into a corner... you will never know the anguish and many other emotions I felt."

The draft report concludes that "Mr Bland has benefited handsomely, perhaps too handsomely, from the scheme". The ASA, though, had shown scant thanks to Miss Cook and a suspicion remained that she was manoeuvred out of her role.

In April 1994 Mr Bland produced an "in-depth marketing survey" about ASA merchandising. This consisted of a fairly elementary analysis of the sports market derived from a Mintel survey.

SwimGB, a merchandising business, was created but performed poorly when trying to compete with established sellers of swim caps, nose clips, earplugs, stopwatches and goggles.

The draft report states that there has been no wrongdoing by Mr Bland, but condemns the ASA for entering into a joint venture with him without an enforceable agreement.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Boyfriend catches fire after row

A man accidentally set himself on fire after a row with his girlfriend, James Jenvey, 24, spilt petrol on his clothes after the argument at his mother's thatched cottage on the Braemore estate in the New Forest. He suffered 50 per cent burns and is critically ill. He had threatened to hurt himself earlier, but his mother and girlfriend, 19, persuaded him to change his mind. Moments later flames from his clothes were ignited by candles on the dinner table. The fire gutted the house.

Instructor killed

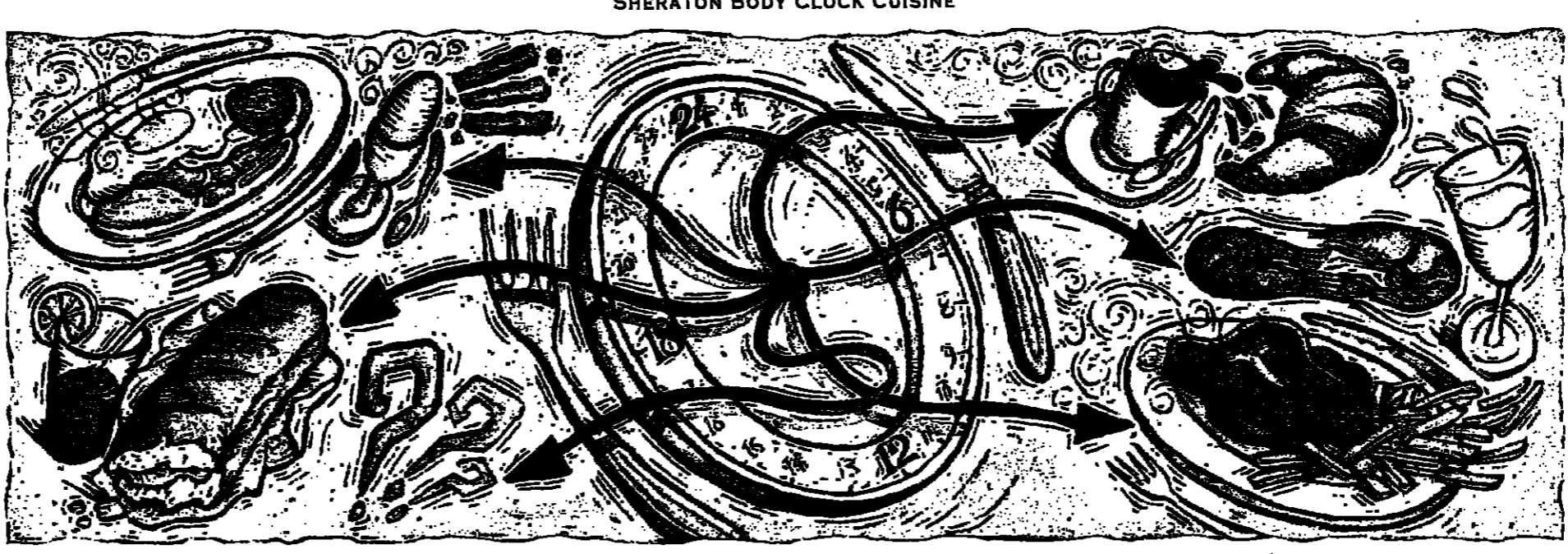
Police are investigating an accident in which a motorcycle instructor died as he led a group of riders on an advanced motorcycling course. David Rhodes of Rochdale apparently failed to complete an overtaking manoeuvre on the A682 at Newsholme, Lancashire.

Boy is found

A nine-year-old boy who disappeared a week ago after a visit with his father has been found safe and well at a house in southeast London, police said. Bradley Carfrae had failed to return to his grandparents' home after an agreed visit. The boy's father was arrested on Friday.

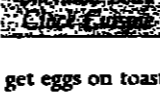
Safe and sound

A nuclear shelter in Basingstoke, Hampshire, sold by the Government for a reputed £2.5 million, may be turned into a nightclub or health club after the local council approved the change in use. A spokesman for the new owners said: "The noise would not disturb anybody."



SHERATON BODY CLOCK CUISINE

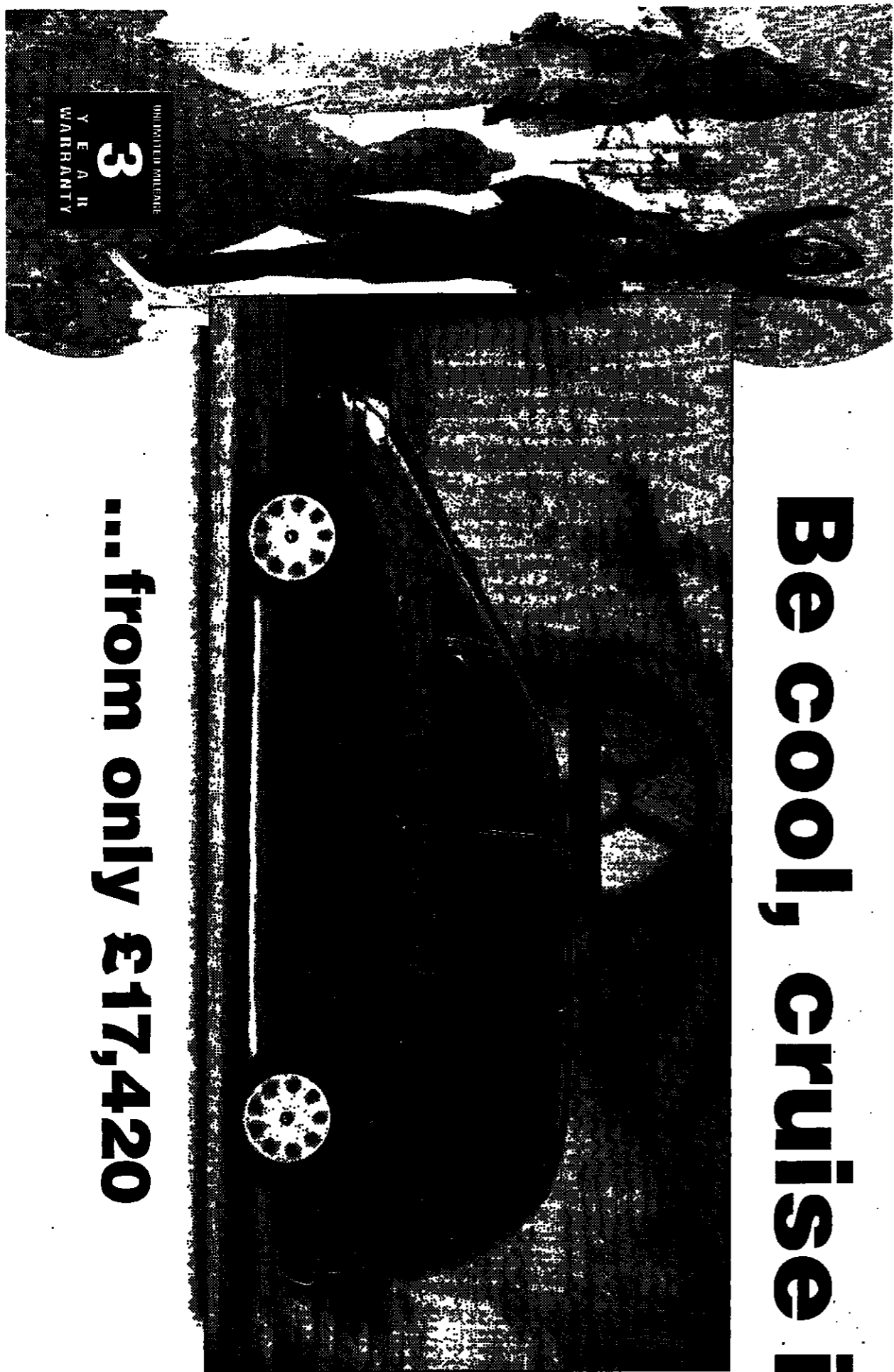
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Cook to go if inquiry accuses ministers

Andrew Pierce and Michael Binyon on the high stakes of high office



Robin Cook at an official photocall yesterday. The Foreign Secretary faces a new Tory attack today

A BELEAGUERED Robin Cook promised yesterday to resign if the independent inquiry into the arms-for-Africa affair found any evidence of ministerial wrongdoing.

The Foreign Secretary suffered a further setback when Donald Anderson, the chairman of the Labour-controlled Foreign Affairs Select Committee, conceded that the Government had been damaged by its handling of the matter.

The Tories will keep up the pressure today when they challenge the Foreign Secretary to make a further statement in the Commons. William Hague, the Conservative leader, signalled for the first time last night that they would question the role of the Prime Minister in the affair.

As the controversy deepened, Mr Cook made an unscheduled appearance on BBC's *Breakfast with Frost* programme to try to regain the initiative. "If ministers are found to have been at error, if they have knowingly misled the House of Commons or if they have adopted the wrong policy, then they must take the consequences," the Foreign Secretary said.

"I accept that, but I know I have nothing to hide. That is one of the reasons why I am very keen that this should be a full and open investigation so that the public can see exactly that."

Mr Cook rejected newspaper reports that Tony Lloyd, the junior Foreign Office Minister, had offered to resign after misleading the Foreign Affairs Select Committee last week. Mr Cook said: "There has never been any question of Tony Lloyd resigning."

The Liberal Democrats called on Mr Cook yesterday to widen the remit of the inquiry beyond the Foreign Office to cover the Ministry of Defence which is also accused of being implicated in organising the Sierra Leone coup that is at the heart of the dispute. Mr Cook denied that defence ministers knew about British involvement in the overthrow of the Sierra Leone junta.

"The fact of the matter is there was no ministerial approval for the activities of Sandline [the company involved in the controversy]. There is no record, no evidence of any ministerial discussion with Sandline," he said.

Asked about claims that Royal Navy engineers had helped mercenaries to repair a helicopter involved in the overthrow of the junta, Mr Cook said that *HMS Cornwall* went to Sierra Leone to provide humanitarian relief.

approval for the activities of Sandline [the company involved in the controversy]. There is no record, no evidence of any ministerial discussion with Sandline," he said.

Row threatens Foreign Office morale

By MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

ROBIN COOK'S insistence from the start on blaming his officials and clearing ministers of all knowledge of the arms shipments will damage morale, especially as the diplomats named as responsible for policy in Africa have not had an opportunity to defend themselves.

Mr Cook said yesterday that a leading lawyer has been engaged to represent them during the inquiry. But the entire Foreign Office has been placed under a gagging order over the whole affair. The inquiry will underline the

contradictions that many senior diplomats warned him would arise from his proclaimed emphasis on a new foreign policy with an ethical dimension.

It may also damage Mr Cook's own standing within his department and beyond. As elsewhere in Whitehall, diplomats do not like ministers who do not stand up for their officials. But the main damage will be outside the Foreign Office.

Mr Cook is gaining a reputation as accident-prone: the row over the Queen's visit to India, the snub he received in Israel and the controversy over his divorce from his wife

had begun to establish a pattern that made him look vulnerable to critics.

The diplomats whose jobs are most at risk are those directly involved in policy in West Africa, and include Peter Penfold, the High Commissioner to Sierra Leone. He could be dismissed either for knowingly encouraging the arming of the ousted government forces in breach of United Nations sanctions or for failing to tell ministers what was going on.

Other diplomats named by Sandline for allegedly approving the arms shipments may also face dismissal or demotion.



Penfold: British High Commissioner at risk

Milestones on road to Cabinet crisis

January 16, 1996: Captain Valentine Strasser ousted as Sierra Leone leader by his deputy, Julius Maada Bio, who promises multiparty elections.

March 29: President Kabbah takes office after winning 59.5 per cent of vote.

May 25, 1997: Troops oust Kabbah. Rebels from the Revolutionary United Front, led by Foday Sankoh, rally to the coup. Major Johnny Paul Koroma becomes military ruler. President Kabbah flees to Guinea, followed by the British High Commissioner, Peter Penfold.

October 8: UN Security Council votes unanimously to impose arms, oil, and travel sanctions on Sierra Leone.

October 24: President Kabbah arrives for Commonwealth summit in Edinburgh as guest of Tony Blair. Junta envoys and foreign ministers from the Economic Community of West African States agree peace deal: President Kabbah to be restored to power by April.

January 27, 1998: Fighting breaks out as junta loyalists clash with Ecomog forces.

February: Weapons flown from Bulgaria to Sierra Leone.

February 5: Lord Avebury tells Foreign Office of Sandline International deal to supply arms. He writes to Foreign Secretary.

February 12: Backed by foreign mercenaries, Ecomog, the West African peacekeeping force, ejects Koroma junta from Freetown.

March 10: President Kabbah returns to Freetown.

According to Robin Cook, Foreign Office officials refer allegations that Sandline International has broken UN embargo to Customs and Excise without informing ministers.

March 12: Tony Lloyd, junior

Foreign Office minister, denies collusion in the counter-coup in a Commons debate. He does not mention the Customs investigation.

April: Customs officers search London headquarters of Sandline and home of Lieutenant-Colonel Tim Spicer, the Sandline boss. Shipping documents for guns seized.

May 2: It is confirmed that Customs is investigating claims that civil servants secretly sanctioned supply of weapons and mercenaries.

Mr Cook denies ministerial approval for any activity by Sandline or contact by ministers with Sandline. Colonel Spicer says he had government approval to help to restore President Kabbah. Company spokesman says Government granted a licence to export arms.

Peter Penfold returns to London to be questioned.

May 4: Foreign Office says it was Lord Avebury's letter that alerted Robin Cook to possible breach of UN embargo.

May 5: Tony Lloyd tells Foreign Affairs Select Committee no minister knew of Customs inquiry until previous Friday.

May 6: Robin Cook announces independent inquiry into allegations that senior Foreign Office officials approved sale of arms.

May 8: Sandline releases copy of a letter sent April 24 by its solicitors to three Cabinet ministers, naming five senior diplomats who allegedly approved weapons shipment.

May 10: *Sunday Times* publishes photographs of military helicopter used by Sandline in Sierra Leone being repaired by engineers from *HMS Cornwall*. It also reveals that Customs and Excise are investigating a second British firm, Sky Air Cargo Services, for transporting arms.

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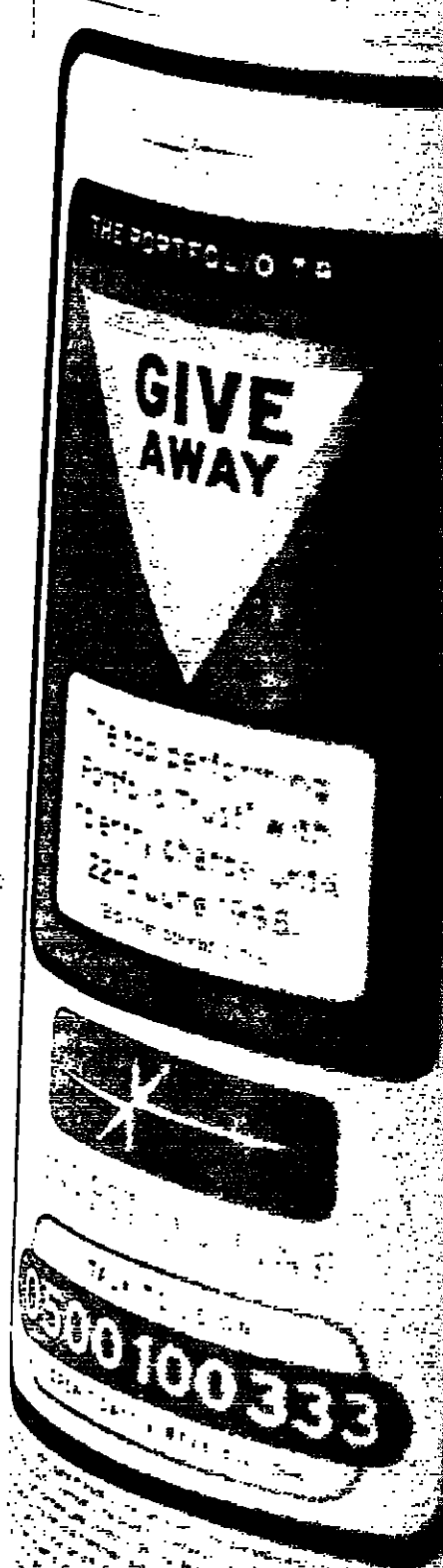
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THE TIMES MONDAY
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Ministry denies Navy had role in toppling junta

By MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE Ministry of Defence, whose alleged involvement in the arms-to-Africa scandal is also being investigated by Customs and Excise, expressed anger yesterday that the Royal Navy had been accused of playing a role in the plot to overthrow the military junta in Sierra Leone.

Sandline International, the security company that shipped arms to Sierra Leone to help in the overthrow, has stated that engineers from the Royal Navy frigate, HMS Cornwall, repaired its Russian-made MI17 helicopter. The helicopter was the only one available for ferrying arms and troops to different parts of Sierra Leone during the heavy fighting against the military junta. Photographs of a Sandline pilot talking to two Royal Marine commandos from HMS Cornwall in March provided proof that the Royal Navy frigate had had contact with Sandline personnel. Although the MoD, like the Foreign Office and other government departments, was under orders yesterday to make no comment about the arms-to-Africa affair, there was anger that a Royal Navy humanitarian mission had become embroiled in the scandal.

MoD sources said that by the time HMS Cornwall had arrived off Sierra Leone, Freetown, the capital, had already fallen to Ecomog, the Nigerian-led force of West African nations, and the junta's fighters had fled into the jungle.

The frigate had been sent to aid the victims of the civil war, to provide food to outlying districts and to set up medical



Freetown, there was still heavy fighting in many parts of the country, and the MI17 helicopter was a vital part of the Sandline operation.

Sandline confirmed yesterday that the MI17 was flown at all times by its own pilots, and that it was "masked" throughout the operation by Ecomog. Asked whether the captain of HMS Cornwall had sent a signal to the MoD to query whether it was legitimate to repair the MI17 helicopter, an MoD spokeswoman said it was not possible to make any comment because of the ongoing investigation by Customs and Excise officials.

However, one allegation over the weekend, that George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, and John Reid, the Armed Forces Minister, had known about Sandline involvement in the overthrow of the junta was rejected as "wholly false" by the MoD yesterday.

centres to treat injured civilians. HMS Cornwall was the only Western warship providing humanitarian assistance, and its one Sea King helicopter was used every day to ferry food and medicine around Sierra Leone.

One MoD source said: "Sierra Leone was still a very dangerous place, even though Freetown had been captured by Ecomog, and the crew of the Sea King had to get permission each day to fly on its missions to avoid the risk of being shot down."

All air operations over Sierra Leone were technically in the hands of Ecomog, but in practice Sandline was in charge. The Sea King's air crew, therefore, had to seek approval for its flight plans from Sandline.

"But the Sea King was not being used to help in the overthrow of the military junta. It was there purely for humanitarian reasons, and it is outrageous to turn this good deed, which was welcomed by the local people, into some sort of conspiracy," the MoD source said.

However, there were still questions to be answered about the decision to let mechanics from HMS Cornwall repair the Sandline helicopter. When the frigate was off



A Sandline pilot flanked by two Royal Marine commandos on HMS Cornwall

Sandline weapons still being used to crush rebel force

FROM SAM KILEY IN ABIDJAN

WEAPONS supplied by the British security company Sandline International to overthrow the military junta in Sierra Leone are still being used in fierce clashes against rebels in the east of the country.

Despite UN sanctions banning the supply of any arms to the war-torn West African country, 30 tonnes of small arms, mainly Kalashnikov assault rifles, were delivered from Bulgaria in February to strengthen the Nigerian-led Ecomog force of about 6,000 men and supporters of President Kabbah, the democratically elected leader.

The weapons and training provided by Sandline played a decisive role in the successful overthrow of the military government in March, but the rebel threat has not disappeared.

The rebels, an alliance of the Revolutionary United Front and former government soldiers, have a reputation for cannibalism, rape, torture and mutilation. Over the weekend, aid workers said 200 people in the north had

had their arms and legs chopped off by the rebels over the past two weeks.

An Ecomog spokesman said that the Nigerians had attacked a force of 350 "bodyguards" belonging to the rebel leader, Major Johnny Paul Koroma, near the northern town of Kambia, killing more than 30 men. The dead included the rebel number three, Dennis Mingo, popularly known as "Superman".

Battlefield setbacks like this may signal the end of Major Koroma's terrorising of Sierra Leone. Yesterday, in a message sent through envoys, he told George Biguzzi, the Roman Catholic bishop of Sierra Leone's northern diocese, that he would surrender to the bishop, as he feared for his life and that of his family at the hands of the Sandline-armed Nigerian force.

Church sources declined to comment, but Ecomog commanders said that it would guarantee the safety of Major Koroma, who had apparently taken refuge in the Bintumani Mountains, near the eastern border with Guinea.

Investigation to focus on UN embargo law

By MICHAEL EVANS

THE interpretation of the law covering the shipment of 35 tonnes of arms by Sandline International to Sierra Leone lies at the heart of the Customs and Excise investigation.

Sandline yesterday issued a statement that set out its own understanding of the arms embargo which was imposed by the United Nations after President Kabbah was overthrown in a military coup last year. The company gave three examples where it was clear that the embargo was aimed "at the military junta" and not at the democratically elected government-in-exile of Mr Kabbah. Sandline said a For-

ign Office bulletin on January 9 specifically referred to the arms embargo covering the military junta. This was repeated by Tony Lloyd, the Foreign Office minister, on March 12, when he said that the Security Council Resolution 1132 "imposed sanctions on the military junta".

The same interpretation was also made by the Commonwealth Heads of Government conference in Edinburgh last October, Sandline said.

However, government legal sources said yesterday it was "quite clear" that Resolution 1132 covered the whole of Sierra Leone.

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US envoy Ross leaves Israel empty-handed

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM AND BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

AMERICA'S envoy to the Middle East left Jerusalem empty-handed last night as relations between the Clinton Administration and the Government of Benjamin Netanyahu sank to such a low that Brian apparently was asked to mediate.

Dennis Ross, the State Department's chief negotiator, cancelled US-hosted peace talks planned for today amid bitter accusations that Washington was trying to force concessions from Israel, namely the handover to Palestinian control of 13 per cent of West Bank territory.

Despite efforts to fix a new date for the meeting, Israeli officials said that Mr Netanyahu was busy until the end of the month.

Behind the scenes, officials said that Friday night's meeting in Jerusalem between Mr Ross and Mr Netanyahu was "the most difficult we ever had". The Tel Aviv paper *Maariv* reported yesterday that the Israeli Prime Minister had accused the Americans of portraying him as an obstacle to peace. "You want to depict me as the one who is thwarting the peace process and I am not prepared to accept that," Mr Netanyahu told Mr Ross. Mr Netanyahu, who raised his voice and at one stage

pounded his desk during the talks, said: "It is impossible for you to invite me to Washington under such conditions. That is public humiliation."

In addition to the 13 per cent land handover being demanded by America, as against the 9 per cent agreed to by Israel, Mr Netanyahu is said to have been infuriated by Hillary Clinton's advocacy of Palestinian statehood last week.

The *Jerusalem Post* quoted American sources as saying that the US side came away shocked on Friday from the depth of Mr Netanyahu's anger on the two issues, despite attempts by American officials to play down the significance

Call to try Achille Lauro hijacker

A group of Israeli right-wingers petitioned the High Court demanding that Abu Abbas, mastermind of the 1985 hijacking of the Italian cruise liner *Achille Lauro*, be arrested and put on trial (Christopher Walker writes).

There were reports that Abbas, leader of the terrorist Palestine Liberation Front, had returned to live in the self-ruler area of the Gaza Strip after years in voluntary exile in Baghdad.

of Mrs Clinton's remarks on a video-link to an Arab-Israeli gathering in Switzerland.

"We accept the explanation that this was her private opinion, but in the region the damage is irreversible," David Bar-Ilan, Mr Netanyahu's communications director, said. "No one on the Arab side will consider it her personal point of view."

Israel television reported at the weekend that Mr Netanyahu had telephoned Tony Blair to seek his help in preventing a confrontation between Israel and the US.

According to *Maariv*, Mr Netanyahu said of the demand by Madeleine Albright, the Secretary of State, that Israel should give an immediate answer to the US plan for reviving the peace talks: "She put a gun next to us in vain."

Eager to avoid further damaging confrontation with Israel, the State Department is working on a compromise solution, which could involve America acting as a "trustee" for parts of the West Bank at the centre of the stand-off.

Under the proposal, Israel would surrender control of the area to American stewardship until the Palestinian Authority fulfilled certain obligations, in particular cracking down on hardliners' activities.



Dana International waves an Israeli flag yesterday after her Eurovision victory

Dana's win hits wrong chord for Jewish militants

By CHRISTOPHER WALKER AND DAMIAN WHITWORTH

THE surprise Eurovision victory for an Israeli transsexual singer, Dana International, has inflamed the cultural war between secular and religious Jews.

Furious ultra-Orthodox politicians had campaigned in vain to prevent the singer, formerly Yaron Cohen, who had her sex change operation in Britain in 1993, representing Israel, and had threatened to try to topple the Government over her selection. They claimed the choice of the former Tel Aviv drag artist during its fiftieth anniversary was sending "a message of darkness" to the world.

One of the leading protesters, Gabi Butbul of the Shas party, said: "Strange people like Dana International should not be sent. She is not one of us... She does not represent me. I am embarrassed over this choice."

But even as the contest took place in Birmingham, about 40,000 Israelis joined a noisy outdoor protest in Tel Aviv against attempted coercion in many areas of Israeli life by zealots, who between them hold 23 seats in the 120-member Knesset.

The biggest-selling Tel Aviv paper reported the victory under the tongue-in-cheek headline "Dana is Eurovision Queen". The victorious singer told Israel TV: "This just goes to show the

world is open-minded and liberated. We are all equal." Dana said yesterday: "This was an answer from God. Last night was a knockout. I think that they will just swallow their tongues." She added: "I did it for us to live freely in this world without hate. I want us to live in one world. We don't need borders. We need to be free from hate, otherwise we will vanish in the following days."

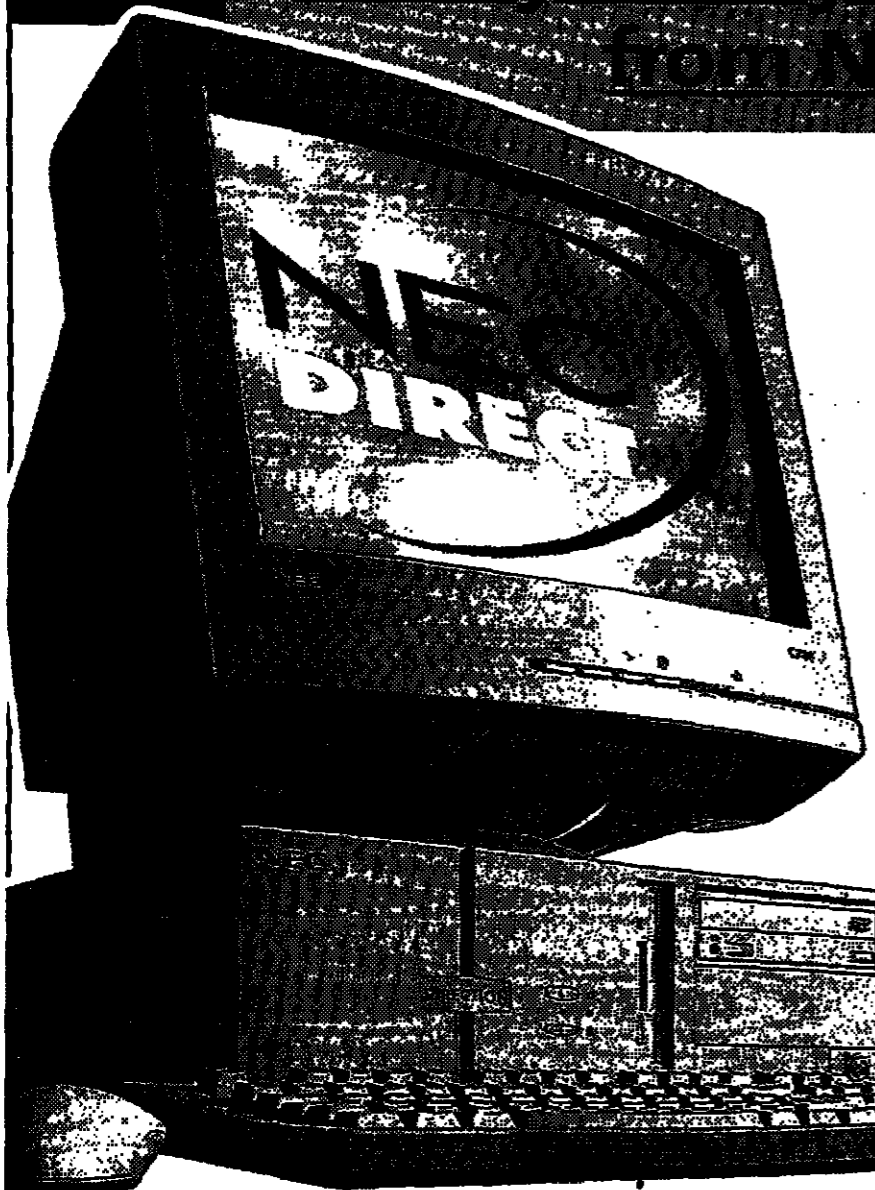
Previously, Dana — who took her name from the singer who won Eurovision for Ireland in 1970 and has now turned anti-abortion campaigner — had been pelted with bottles and rubbish by ultra-Orthodox youths when she performed at an outdoor concert.

"Today it is I whom the Orthodox are chasing, but tomorrow it could be someone else whose lifestyle is different," she said.

Tsvika Pitk, composer of the winning song *Diva*, said Dana had been chosen for professional reasons. "She is one of the best singers here and she suits the framework of Eurovision. Eurovision does not have religious judges."

German advance Guido Horn, the outlandish German entrant, was awarded seventh place, instead of Norway, after a reallocation of points because of an error by the Spanish authorities.

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WORLD SUMMARY

Luyt exit averts boycott

Johannesburg: The threat of a new international boycott against South African rugby has subsided after the resignation of Louis Luyt, the country's rugby union president, whose reluctant withdrawal from the centre stage marks the end of an era during which his dictatorial style became synonymous with everything that was wrong in the sport (Luigo Gilmore writes). His resignation came after months of controversy during which he had tried to fend off charges of racism, nepotism and mismanagement in the sport.

Police attack Kenyan MPs

Nairobi: Ten MPs were beaten when riot police charged demonstrators at a rally near Kitale in western Kenya, witnesses reported. Scores of people were injured when the rally, called to discuss security and land problems in the Trans Nzoia district, was broken up after being declared illegal by the district commissioner, the *Sunday Standard* reported. (Reuters)

Ex-wife on trial for Gucci killing

Rome: Patrizia Reggiani, the ex-wife of Maurizio Gucci, the fashion empire heir gunned down in 1995, goes on trial today for his murder, together with four alleged accomplices (Richard Owen writes). Each of the accused could be jailed for up to 30 years if convicted. Signor Guccio, grandson of Guccio Gucci, the founder of the company, was shot dead in a Milan street.

Defence chief pushes his man

Jerusalem: Yitzhak Mordechai, the Israeli Defence Minister, has asked the Cabinet to approve the appointment of Major-General Shaul Mofaz as the next Israeli Chief of Staff. The move was seen as a victory for Mr Mordechai over the Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, who warned Matan Vilnai, a former deputy chief of staff, to get the post. (Reuters)

Faroes coalition wants autonomy

Copenhagen: Europe could soon find itself with a new sovereign state if the home-rule coalition Government of the Faroe Islands, formed at the weekend, succeeds in its plans for independence from Denmark (Christopher Follett writes). The coalition wants the Faroes to remain part of the Danish commonwealth but to assume control over foreign and legal affairs.

Chile searches for dissidents' remains

By GABRIELLA GAMINI, SOUTH AMERICA CORRESPONDENT

FORENSIC scientists in Chile have begun excavating a site believed to be a mass grave where the military buried up to 150 dissidents murdered during the country's brutal 17-year dictatorship.

Confirmation that a sand dune in the northern Atacama desert could be the grave of dozens of torture victims came with the unearthing of two bullet-riddled bodies last week. The bodies, with hands tied behind their backs with barbed wire, were found after a former soldier confessed to witnessing killings on the spot.

"We have unearthed the first evidence and will dig a larger area to find the others so that they can finally be returned to their families," said Judge Juan Guzmán, who is supervising the excavation and also heads a wider investigation, launched this month, into the disappearance of 1,120 people during General Augusto Pinochet's regime between 1973 and 1990. Felipe Valenzuela, a congressman who is also part of the investigation, said: "There are three graves where it is believed the military dumped 150 people."

The grave, he added, is about 600ft from a similar pit where 29 bodies were found in 1990. The preservative qualities of the desert soil and sand made it possible for those remains to be "identified as 'dissidents' arrested by the secret police of General Pinochet, who retired as head of the army last month and took up a lifetime seat in the Senate."

The confession by the unidentified soldier came as part of a programme that promises anonymity to former military officers who reveal the location of graves. The former officer said that he had participated in "executions" of political prisoners held at Pisagua in a concentration camp set up near a tiny fishing village on the desert's Pacific coast.

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Suharto flies out as MPs rebel over price rises

PRESIDENT Suharto flew out of an increasingly restive Indonesia at the weekend as students across the country kept up relentless pressure for reforms despite his appeals for calm.

Their energies were given a powerful new focus yesterday at the funeral of a bystander who was beaten to death by security forces during a student protest in Yogyakarta. He was buried in a white-draped coffin laden with flowers amid hundreds of mourners hours after he was caught up in the demonstrations.

Mr Gatotkaca, 40, was hit so hard over the head that his skull cracked. He was a victim of the increasingly bitter proxy struggle that the students are waging against the Government on behalf of virtually every segment of society.

Mr Gatotkaca was a nature lover and conservationist who was set upon with three friends as they were sitting down for dinner. Bani Siswono, the Yogyakarta police chief, said it was hard to tell the innocent from the guilty in the dark.

As well as the students, doctors and nurses, civil servants and millions of ordinary Indonesians are all demanding urgent reform of the political system, reduction of the cost of living, or the removal of President Suharto. Millions of jobs are threatened and the livelihoods of many others have been affected by the huge increases in the cost of petrol, cooking oil and other necessities as part of the price of meeting the conditions imposed by the International Monetary Fund for loans to the Government.



David Watts reports from Yogyakarta where the funeral of a man killed by the police has focused demands for reform

likely to harden attitudes on both sides. One intelligence man was set upon by students as he was leaving a mosque in Bogor, south of Yogyakarta, on Friday. A fellow officer came to his assistance and was hit on the head by a stone that killed him.

The students have been careful to focus their attacks on the state, its officers and property rather than on taking out their frustrations on the businesses of ethnic Chinese as they have done in other parts of the country.

Last night the two streets that saw the brunt of the clashes between the police and more than 1,000 students were still littered with stones, lumps of concrete and coconuts. But, more ominous for the Govern-



A mourner at the Gatotkaca funeral

ment, telephone boxes, a police box and a telephone exchange were all burnt and most traffic lights have been levelled. The students said that they would hold no further protests for the moment in honour of the victims.

The riots started not long after President Suharto had made an unprecedented and impassioned plea for national stability shortly before he flew to Cairo for the Group of 15 economic summit.

"I plead for the people's understanding. I understand their suffering because I come from a poor family," he said in a broadcast carried on all television channels. "I have confidence in the people. I am leaving the country calm, hopeful that political and national stability can be maintained. In my absence, I hope everything goes well, especially the work for reforms. We must not let demands for reform destroy everything that we have achieved through development."

For the first time in more than 30 years, during which it has not created a single piece of legislation of its own accord, the House of Representatives found its voice.

Members questioned the Energy Minister for 11 hours over the price increases. The House commission for trade and industry, which includes many members of the ruling Golkar Party, demanded that Kumoro Mangkusuroto, Minister of Mines and Energy, should resign if he could not reverse the increases.

The Deputy Speaker said that the country was in danger of collapse if the protests continued.



Muslim youths march on the funeral of Bishop John Joseph in Faisalabad yesterday

Zealots attack mourners after bishop's funeral

FROM ZAHID HUSSAIN IN ISLAMABAD

HUNDREDS of Muslim extremists yesterday attacked Christian mourners with sticks and bricks as they returned from the funeral of a Roman Catholic bishop in the Punjab city of Faisalabad. The chanting zealots set fire to houses and attacked shops in a Christian district.

The mob demanded the immediate execution of Ayub Masih, a Christian peasant who was sentenced to death for blasphemy by a Pakistani court last month.

Masih was involved in a row with a Muslim neighbour who accused him of speaking favourably about the British author Salman Rushdie, who has lived in hiding since Iran ordered him killed for his novel *The Satanic Verses*.

Christian women and children took refuge in nearby houses until security forces arrived, residents said. Police arrested 16 Muslims and fired teargas and bullets to disperse Christian men who attacked them when they returned to find their homes ransacked, witnesses said. Two people were hurt.

Bishop John Joseph, a campaigner for religious rights, killed himself last week in protest at the death penalty given to Masih. He was buried at the Cathedral of St Peter and St Paul in an emotional service.

Thousands of Christians and human rights activists across the country converged

on the city to pay homage to the bishop who, they believe, sacrificed his life to draw attention to the persecution of religious minorities.

The mourners demanded the abolition of Pakistan's blasphemy law.

The Minister for Religious Affairs, Raja Zafarullah Haq, yesterday defended the legislation. "Demands for scrapping the law stem from ignorance about the consequences of the same," he said. "If it was (scrapped) ... the law of the jungle will prevail in the country." A Foreign Ministry spokesman was also quoted as rejecting the US State Department's call for the repeal of the law. "We ourselves very much regret the death of Bishop Joseph, who needlessly took his own life," the ministry spokesman said.

Under pressure from Muslim extremists, the police detained another Christian, Ranjiah Masih (no relation), on Friday for allegedly desecrating Koranic verses during an attack on a shop in Faisalabad. They demanded that he also be tried for blasphemy and have called for a strike today to press their case. Islamic law requires a mandatory death sentence for anyone blaspheming against the Prophet Muhammad.

In Karachi, more than 2,000 Christian protesters attacked shops and smashed cars.

Leading article, page 21

French publishers unite against court 'censorship'

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

FRENCH book publishers have rebelled against what they claim is a crushing new form of censorship, after courts imposed record fines on works of investigative journalism.

The outcry follows a decision by a Brest court to fine publishers Albin-Michel Fr5.8 million (£880,000) over a book investigating corruption in business tribunals which was deemed to

be libellous. The publisher was ordered to remove several passages from *The Mafia of the Business Tribunals* by Antoine Gaudino, and a fine of Fr100,000 was imposed for every uncensored version on sale.

French publishers attacked the ruling as "exorbitant" and vowed to publish M Gaudino's book jointly and in full if the verdict was upheld.

A similar judgment was reached in Toulon, where the publisher Plon was fined Fr780,000 after a court ruled that

a new book about the murder of Yann Piat, an MP, was partly libellous. Publishers said the new attitude of the courts could destroy attempts to investigate the seamy side of politics and business.

"Editors, unite!" declared *Journal du Dimanche* yesterday, describing the rulings as an old-fashioned attack on freedom of expression "in an insidious new form". Francis Esmenard, the head of Albin-Michel, said the company could be forced out

of business if the fine was upheld. The status of French journalism was seriously damaged recently by the publication of a book which alleged that Piat had been killed on the orders of two former Cabinet ministers. The authors provided no proof and were heavily fined.

But publishers argue that, if courts are allowed to impose what amounts to a death sentence on a book, even the most economically robust houses will avoid controversial material.

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America suddenly discovers Euroland, superpower of the future

President Clinton touches down in Berlin this week on his way to the Group of Eight summit of finance ministers. Since he knows some German, his speechwriters are busily searching for a telling phrase in the native language.

He might — treading the path of Kennedy's *Ich bin ein Berliner* (I am a doughnut) — try *Ich bin Europäer*, which has at least no cake-shop connotations.

America has suddenly discovered Europe as an emerging superpower. A sense of global shift — Asia down, Europe up — has stolen upon the Americans. "Europe is

INSIDE GERMANY



BY ROGER BOYES

back!" proclaims *The Wall Street Journal*. But where were we? Washington must have dozed off again. America's students of the Maas-

tricht and EMU process predict trouble. Martin Feldstein, formerly Ronald Reagan's chief economic adviser, believes that the euro will "create or worsen political conflicts and economic instability in Europe". Henry Kissinger is worried too.

Most US commentators — for example, Strobe Talbott, the Deputy Secretary of State, are more benign about Euroland. "The next century will be European," promises the historian Paul Kennedy. "The baton of world leadership" will pass to Europe, says Samuel Huntington.

Until recently, Europe was regarded by the Americans as

an arthritic, quarrelsome old maid. The perceptions were of high structural unemployment and an overregulated bureaucratic culture that had failed to tackle, let alone solve, problems such as pensions and healthcare. Now, it seems, Europe is about to throw away its crutches and dance a jig.

The creation of the magic kingdom of Euroland feeds the kind of statistical comparison beloved of US opinion makers. The joint gross domestic product of the European Union is only a little way behind that of the United

States. The EU has a 20 per cent share of world trade, the US 18 per cent. The EU accounts for 31 per cent of global output, the US about 27 per cent. Of the 100 biggest companies, 36 are European and only 24 American.

Whatever the merits of such comparisons with America — not always compelling, since Euroland is likely to remain a fiction for a while — it is plainly time to start renegotiating the transatlantic relationship. But President Clinton does not seem to know where to start. Should he be urging Europe to push towards political integration? What if a united

Europe challenges America in a more forthright manner? Mr Talbot put his finger on another problem: "We have found that EU member states at times seem more concerned about the harmony of process than the effectiveness of outcome... hence our concern that this tendency toward what might be called lowest-common-denominatorism could be even more of a problem if and when European states ever organise themselves to act as one."

The American nightmare is a French-flavoured confrontational Euroland. Britain cannot lead Euroland; it can

only be led, in the American estimation, from the centre, not the margins. So it is to Germany that Mr Clinton turns, and specifically to Helmut Kohl. He has been advised, probably correctly, that this is the Chancellor's last political summer.

His speeches in Berlin this week will reflect this assessment, so bridging past and future in the Kohlman manner. There will be a tribute to the Berlin airlift and a loud commitment to Nato enlargement. But chiefly the President will be urging Germany to keep Europe open — open mar-

kets, open borders and open to the East.

Here then is the paradox. Herr Kohl is on the way out, yet he has never been so important to the reshaping of transatlantic strategy. The Chancellor is personally identified with the European-Russian relationship, he will be travelling to China next month and is far less ambiguous than the Social Democrats about eastward expansion. As far as Mr Clinton is concerned, Herr Kohl is Mr Europe. Without him there will be a leadership vacuum. Americans are nervous. Emerging superpowers need confident helmsmen.

95 mudslide victims given mass burial

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

UNDER a blazing Mediterranean sun, 95 of the estimated 118 victims of southern Italy's mudslide disaster were buried yesterday in a mass funeral at Sarno, with sobbing relatives throwing themselves on the coffins and screaming in grief.

Romano Prodi, the Prime Minister, and President Scalfaro attended the funeral, and vowed to "stay close" to the people of Campania, the affected region near Naples. "We are with you," Signor Scalfaro said.

The Pope, in his weekly address in St Peter's Square, assured those bereaved and made homeless that they were in his prayers. The pontiff said the people of Campania had been "sorely tried in the recent dramatic floods".

Sarno, a town of 35,000 people near the Amalfi coast, was the worst hit when torrential rain brought thick mud pouring down the hillside last week, devastating homes and hospitals and engulfing whole streets. The authorities have stopped issuing figures, but hundreds are believed to be still unaccounted for in what Italian newspapers called a

"latter-day Pompeii". Yesterday the coffins were laid out on the town sports field, with white coffins for the children. A crowd of 15,000 mourners packed into the field as a choir sang hymns and nuns moved among the distraught relatives offering comfort. Several mourners fainted and were taken to hospital. The bodies were buried in a specially cleared section of the Sarno cemetery which, like much

remembered "every second" of three days spent in a "concrete tomb", a garage filled almost to the top with mud, water and rubble.

He had suffered "terrible thirst". His bandaged face still bruised and swollen, he said the thought of his mother, "who still covers me in kisses even though I am 22", had kept him going as well.

He said he kept afloat by holding on to branches and an

activity base in Naples providing tents and bulldozers. Italian officials conceded that there was chaos among the emergency services. The rescue effort has been further hampered by the baking sunshine, which has dried out much of the mud, making it more difficult to dig. Medical workers said there had been outbreaks of dysentery, and gave a warning that there could be an epidemic as water supplies broke down.

Environmentalists blame deforestation and unchecked illegal construction for the disaster, saying whole chunks of the 3,600ft mountain above Sarno and other stricken towns gave way because the soil had been weakened by timber clearance and forest fires. *La Voce della Campania*, the local paper, said the Camorra, the Naples mafiosi behind much of the illegal housing, was "profiting from the tragedy it caused". It said much of the transport being used in the rescue effort was in the hands of local Camorra-controlled construction firms. Police said there had also been looting in abandoned houses.

6 I was trapped in there with chickens, rabbits and vipers which had been swept down the hillside

else in the down-at-heel hillside town, was covered in mud.

Rescue workers have all but given up hope of finding any more survivors. Roberto Robustelli, 22, a philosophy student, who was found alive on Friday evening, said in hospital yesterday that he owed his life to prayer and "images of a wonderful life". Signor Robustelli said he re-

turned car. "I was trapped in there with chickens, rabbits and vipers which had been swept down the hillside."

Sarno residents are angry over the confused figures for the dead and missing, and are convinced that more could have been saved. At the weekend American forces moved in to help the 3,000 Italian rescue workers, with 40 servicemen from the US Naval Support



A mourner weeps among the coffins laid out in rows at the sports field in Sarno


US envoy 'has no idea' for Kosovo

FROM TOM WALKER IN PRISTINA

THE US negotiator Richard Holbrooke, credited with helping to bring peace to Bosnia, yesterday brought his whirlwind diplomacy to the Kosovo conflict.

Whether he can use his special relationship with President Milosevic of Yugoslavia to nudge the province back from the edge of catastrophe is doubtful. An increasingly large swath of Kosovo is now a battleground, and Mr Holbrooke admitted he had "no idea" how to resolve the latest Balkans war. "We are hear to listen and learn," he said after two hours of talks with Ibrahim Rugova, leader of the Democratic League for Kosovo's pacifist wing.

Before going to Pristina, Mr Holbrooke was in Belgrade, where Mr Milosevic reiterated his claim that the recent referendum on Kosovo had proved Serbs do not need international involvement in the province. The Albanians say they are ready to talk, but they are no easier to deal with, as Mr Rugova still denies any involvement with the Kosovo Liberation Army, which is openly at war with the Serbs.




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Art for art's sake

Creativity and curiosity could be the results of a genetic blip. Anjana Ahuja reports

Consider the following scenario. A kangaroo walks into a bar and orders a whisky. "That will be £3," says the bemused barman. "We don't get many kangaroos in here." The kangaroo replies: "At £3 a drink, it's no wonder."

Not one of the world's funniest jokes, but we can see the humour in it. That is because, although the joke combines several bizarre concepts — English-speaking kangaroos that frequent bars looking for a cheap drink — the kangaroo's riposte is appropriate. Even when confronted with situations that could never crop up in real life, our brains are able to deal with them.

Dr Steven Mithen, an archaeologist at Reading University, puts it down to a clever phenomenon called cognitive fluidity. This allows information stored in different parts of the brain to join up with information tucked away in other areas. Our knowledge of kangaroos, language and bars are all filed separately — we only "get" the joke because we can mix and match concepts to believe momentarily in a whisky-swilling marsupial with a nice line in quickfire wit.

Moreover, says Dr Mithen in his ambitious and ground-breaking book *The Prehistory of the Mind*, cognitive fluidity is the key to much more than humour. As well as hunting and living more intelligently by crafting better tools, there was another, unintended spin-off — we invented culture. Art, religion and science flourished. But how did modern man become so radically different from his ancestors?

"We have to get round a major dilemma," says Dr Mithen, who will deliver a public lecture at the Science Museum in London tomorrow. "Neanderthals had a capacity for language and their brains were the same size as ours. But there is no evidence of creativity or curiosity. Why? He suggests that the Neanderthal brain could think only in terms of narrow domains, such as foraging or social relations.

It was not until we could blend the information from different domains that we really came into our own — this is where cognitive fluidity comes in. "A hunter that can impose a human mind on an animal can predict how it will behave," he says. "He will have a tremendous competitive advantage. If he can tailor tools for hunting particular animals, he will hunt more effectively. That requires him to mix his knowledge of artefacts, humans and animals."

That ability to mix information emerged from a genetic accident that rewired the brain. Dr Mithen suggests. This accident, though, offered such superiority over our an-



Picasso's *Le Rêve* is an example of the limitless creativity achieved by the human brain, says Dr Steven Mithen

cestors that it quickly came to dominate human evolution. An unintended spin-off of this greater brain power was a cultural explosion 30,000 to 60,000 years ago.

Dr Mithen notes there is evidence for a "Big Bang" in culture at this time — the first cave paintings were created, people were burying their dead rather than leaving them to rot, and men were designing tools to do specific jobs, such as hunting game. In other words, art, religion and science, in their most basic forms, were emerging.

Dr Mithen wrote the book because he felt that the "hunter-gatherer" concept wheeled out by evolutionary psychologists to explain every aspect of behaviour was failing to uncover the essence of the modern human mind. He is the main proponent of a new strain of research, cognitive archaeology, which uses ancient artefacts to deduce how

ancient minds worked. He has set up the country's only course in the subject.

"I think evolutionary psychology works really well, but not for modern humans," says Dr Mithen. "A good theory needs to be able to go the extra step. It doesn't explain why we are so different from our ancestors and other primates. The psychologists seem hung up on sexual selection, but that cannot explain culture. Creativity doesn't explain it either — culture is not something that was plopped in there by God."

Professor Steven Pinker, the American neuropsychologist, has suggested that art is prized for its uselessness. The owner of an expensive Picasso, say, is signalling his desirability to a potential mate he is so well off that, in addition to being able to provide food and shelter, he can afford to hang a priceless but functionally pointless painting on the wall.

Dr Mithen, who has a penchant for Minimalist sculpture, is unconvinced: "I think Pinker is brilliant but to say that people collect paintings for prestige does not explain why people paint them in the first place. And it doesn't explain people's very diverse choice in art." Dr Mithen offers an alternative explanation.

Because of the elaborate cerebral cross-wiring in modern brains, he says, we cannot help fielding an almost infinite assortment of ideas. That is responsible for the limitless creativity we see in art galleries, cinema, literature and scientific endeavour. Religious beliefs are another by-product, as we strive to make sense of the world around us.

However, there are controversial implications of this endless torrent of ideas. Dr Mithen believes that paranormal beliefs are a scourge. "If anything we have become less rational," he says. Neanderthals didn't worship the Moon, for example. It is cognitive fluidity that has allowed us to impose human values and thoughts on objects. As a result, we are now open to ideas for which there is no evidence in the real world, such as parapsychology.

Dr Mithen skates over the biology and chemistry of how cognitive fluidity arose; he is exploring this in his next book. He gently reminds me that he is an archaeologist. However, as he argues compellingly in his book, peering into the distant past can contribute enormously to an understanding of human behaviour.

"People think that archaeologists are people in funny hats who dig in the sun," he says. "It engenders a peculiar view of what we are about. Archaeology is as important as psychology, linguistics and philosophy in thinking about what it is to be human."

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Quality of song Hot birds Blood like water

Trill of the chase

THE trill of a songbird may sound like nothing more than *jolie de vivre*. But to a biologist it is full of interesting puzzles. If the quality of a male's song is designed to convince the female that he is good breeding material, what stops the weakling birds learning how to fake it? And what exactly does the quality of a song tell the female about the male?

Three zoologists from Duke University in North Carolina have now suggested that the quality of song reflects how well a male bird has overcome the stresses of early life. This is when song is learnt, says Professor Steve Nowicki, and the learning depends on the correct development of certain parts of the brain during a period when the young bird is most likely to experience stress from a shortage of food, or from infestation by parasites.

"Males that have more complex songs — or songs that females prefer — went through the learning process better because their brains developed better," he says. "It's because they were better nourished or less stressed during this critical period in the late nestling, early fledgling phase."

If true, the theory implies that the song tells the story of a male bird's early life — how fit he was then, and how well his parents raised him. The new theory, published in *The American Zoologist*, is the latest seeking to explain birdsong. Early theories



SCIENCE BRIEFING
Nigel Hawkes

held that songs were, like the display of the peacock, a trait that had run away and become ever more exaggerated as females evolved a preference for it. But detailed examination suggests that the circumstances under which this can happen are limited. Another theory holds that exaggerated traits are evidence of genetic fitness, because only a healthy bird could flourish with a huge tail or if it were spending all its time trilling. But if true, any elaborate song would do.

The evidence is that better singers tend to have more, and fitter, offspring. This suggests that song is a reflection of genetic quality, which the birds cannot fake because they sing well only if their brains developed fully during the period when songs are learnt. Brain development, nutritional stress and song learning occur at the same stage, necessary if the theory is to make sense.

Still unsolved is what exactly the female is listening for, and why some bird species have complex songs while other similar species do not. The answer, the team suspects, is that females do not listen to the complexity of the song, but how well the male has learnt it. By doing so, they are getting an insight into a potential male's brain development. To try to confirm this, zoologists are now doing experiments in which male birds are fed different diets to see if it influences the quality of their song.

Tracking the culprits in a deadly chicken run



LORRIES used to transport poultry are badly designed, says Professor John Webster, of the University of Bristol. When the lorries are stationary, the birds are huddled together, and far too hot. When they are moving at 50mph, the hens are too cold. How does he know? He has designed an artificial hen called Gloria, a chicken-sized box covered in deep pile carpet. Placed in a travelling crate with the hens, Gloria can measure the exact conditions the birds are experiencing.

The results explain why so many hens die, from either heat-stroke or hypothermia when they are travelling in numbers of up to 6,000 on poultry lorries.

Professor Webster told the university's newsletter: "I was involved in a court case some years ago where a poultry transporter arrived with 900 dead birds twice in one week in January. Fundamentally, the vehicle was a killer in this weather."

Better news may be on the way. Four Glorias have been used to map hot and cold spots on six different poultry lorries, and guidelines, which may be adopted, have been produced on how to modify the vehicles to make the hens' lives less miserable.

New heart hope flows from blood discovery



BLOOD flowing along an artery swirls like the water going down the plughole, researchers at Imperial College have found. They believe that the swirl, created by the way arteries are constructed, is designed to prevent blood vessels furring up, the process that is responsible for heart attacks and strokes. Professor Colin Caro described the discovery last week at a Royal Academy of Engineering conference. His team used magnetic resonance imaging and computational fluid dynamics techniques, originally developed for aircraft design, to show that blood swirls as it moves along arteries.

"Nature seems to go to so much trouble to make our arteries non-planar and avoid stagnant areas that there must be a good reason for it," he says.

The team is working with surgeons at Hammersmith and Charing Cross Hospital and the Bristol Heart Institute to see if it can improve bypass operations — 400,000 of which are carried out worldwide each year. The main danger is intimal hyperplasia, where the blood vessel thickens, blocking it again. Improving flow might reduce this risk.

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Social butterfly's flights of fancy



Butterflies have left the fairy forest for an infinitely more decadent and grown-up world this summer, says Style Editor Grace Bradberry

Butterflies are nature's one-season wonder, bursting out in a show of summer colour, then fading away before winter. How appropriate, then, that the butterfly should have flitted its way down so many catwalks in the spring/summer shows this year, a flight of designer fancy in a season of industrial greys.

From Dior's butterfly hairpins to Dolce & Gabbana's diaphanous chiffon evening gowns, this ephemeral creature was the most popular decorative motif in a season that veered between function and fantasy. There could be no clearer signal of the desire of some designers to push us towards a display of overt femininity.

But can we buy into a trend that reminds us of childhood's butterfly brooches? Can we find room for the offered

sugar and spice? The fate of last summer's frills (they're on every sale rack) is probably a clear sign that we can't. Yet, far from creating the merely pretty, designers have managed to do something new with butterflies, making them sinister and insectile. This isn't the fairy forest but a dingy twilight world.

Indeed, designers have come up with a whole ecosystem for the season, with

clothes decorated with flowers and animal magic that are clearly intended for nightclubs and dimly lit restaurants rather than summer days in the park. In short, they're designs for social butterflies, embodying the spirit of decadence in which designers are wallowing right now.

If the butterfly is this season's star, that's probably because it's such a vivid symbol of the metamorphosis that fashion can bring about. But this particular insect is also hot in the art world right now. Damien Hirst's butterflies have been fluttering around among the cognoscenti for some time, while Jade Jagger, Mick's daughter, has produced a series of small paintings reminiscent of collections of pinned butterflies.

It is no coincidence that Matthew Williamson, who counts Jade as his muse, should have picked up on her images for his first London show, a debut raved about by fashion editors in both Britain and America. Williamson's bijou collection featured sorbet-coloured silk dresses and cashmere tanks scattered not only with butterflies but also dragonflies and peacock feathers. Much of the delicate embroidery and sequin work was done in India.

Emma Hope, the British shoe designer has produced mules and purses also scattered with butterflies, and Julien Macdonald allowed flora and fauna to flourish on his knitwear.

The natural world also blossomed at Ghost, where outside poppies were embroidered on wispy tulle dresses but had a dishevelled, up-till-dawn look about them.

So despite the austere manish suits that dominate the season, there is room for some full-on femininity, but it has to be a femininity that has lived. If you're going to do the whole creature thing this summer, make sure they're creatures of the night.



FAR LEFT: Chiffon silk dress, from £1,200; oyster satin pedalpushers, £180; shoes, £280, all Dolce & Gabbana, 175 Sloane Street SW1. Tel: 0171-235 0335. Butterflies, £2 each, from Basia Zaycka, 135 King's Road London SW3. Tel: 0171-351 7276
TOP LEFT: Devoré dress, £225, by Whistles. Tel: 0171-487 4484. Shoes, £145, by Russell & Bromley, 24-25 New Bond Street W1. Tel: 0171-629 6903. Peacock feather fan and necklace from Erickson Beamon, 38 Elizabeth Street SW1. Tel: 0171-259 0202
BOTTOM LEFT: Buttermilk poppy embroidered tulle dress, £260, by Ghost, 36 Ledbury Road W11. Tel: 0181-980 3121. Feather butterflies, £50 each, from Erickson Beamon
ABOVE: Beaded dress, £480, by Matthew Williamson at Joseph, 70 Fulham Road SW3. National inquiries: 0171-253 4200. Diamanté clasp heels, £315, by Gina Couture, 189 Sloane Street SW1. Tel: 0171-235 2932. Feather earring, £40, from Erickson Beamon

Photographer: JOHN SWANNELL; Stylist: Deborah Brett; Hair: Raphael Salley at Michaeljohn; Make-up: Jochen Fuchs at Michaeljohn; Model: Willa at Select



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The long road to happiness

In a rare interview, the writer V.S. Naipaul reveals to Jason Cowley the anguish he still feels at betraying his first wife, and the contentment he has found with his second

It is a shock to hear V.S. Naipaul say that he no longer feels a stranger in Britain. For most of the four decades since he moved here, he has lived peripatetically, returning, again and again, to the Caribbean, where he was born: to the Indian sub-continent, Africa and the Americas. No one writes more convincingly of displacement and exile, of the loneliness of the migrant. "When I talk about being an exile or a refugee I'm not just using a metaphor," he once said. "I'm talking literally."

In *The Enigma of Arrival*, his fictionalised account of the period he lived in a cottage on the Wiltshire estate of the reclusive and aesthete Stephan Tennant, Naipaul writes of watching the sun set over Stonehenge. The experience disorients him; he feels of the landscape yet apart from it, a "stranger here, with the nerves of a stranger."

"But for the first time in my life I no longer feel like that," he says. "Something has happened. I don't know what, I really don't. My feeling is that the people of England have changed. It's rather marvellous for a people with such an imperial past to change, but they have. I don't feel rejected any more. I feel really quite welcome. Since planting a garden at my house in the Avon Valley, I've become concerned with the land, flowers, the changing of the seasons."

This is not just the slow resignation of old age — he is 65 — it is something more. For the first time in many years, certainly since the death of his beloved brother Shiva in 1985, Naipaul seems at ease, happy even. His face, once a mask of suffering, still carries traces of his torment — the mournful eyes, the downturned mouth — but his conversation is full of laughter and mischief.

He is sitting, straight-backed, at a table in the drawing room of his smart, minimally furnished Central London flat. His thinning hair is brushed back, revealing a smooth, pale forehead; his silver beard prospers wirily.

Nadira Khanum Alvi, his second wife, brings us coffee. She is a tall, handsome woman in her late thirties, animated in conversation and, like her husband, utterly charming. Before their meeting, she worked as a journalist in Lahore, writing political and cultural commentary; but now she is his protector, lover and amanuensis. And, one suspects, the source of his revitalisation. "I protect him from the charlatans and chancers, the journalists who know nothing of his work and don't bother to do any research..." I shift uneasily in my chair.

Their meeting was, in many ways, miraculous. Naipaul was in Lahore, researching his new book, *Beyond Belief*, when they met by chance at a dinner party. "As I walked in," Nadira recalls, "someone told me that V.S. Naipaul was in the room. I was thrilled, and walked straight over and kissed him."

Within three weeks of their meeting, during which they talked and talked about their past lives, Naipaul told Nadira that he loved her and hoped one day to marry her.

"My kiss was not some silly, fluff-headed thing," she says, lighting a cigarette. "It was an act of reverence — I loved *An Area of Darkness*, one of his books on India. I also felt an immense pity for him. He looked so sad, had these terrible black marks on his face."

"Yes, yes. It's true," Naipaul says, leaning towards me so that I can see the remnants of these marks. "Yes, I had these marks and eczema everywhere."

The cause, he says, was grief, grief. They first appeared after the death of my brother, following the line of the blood vessels on my face."

"He looked terrible," Nadira adds, "like an old man. I wondered what had caused him to look like he was on the edge of the abyss. I discovered it was a difficult time for him; his first wife, Pat, was dying."

"Yet he said a wonderful thing to me. He has never wanted children, but he said that if he could have them he would have had them with me. And he discovered this



Portrait of the writer as exile: V.S. Naipaul says: "My feeling is that the people of England have changed. It's rather marvellous. I feel quite welcome"

wonderful fondness for children — at the age of 65! Children adore him, too," Naipaul nods approvingly.

So are they intending to have children? "I don't have a uterus," Nadira replies. "But we are so happy. We are like two halves of a circle coming together. Some people never find their ideal half; we were lucky. I'm afraid his first marriage, for all its depth, was very bad."

V.S. Naipaul married Patricia Ann Hale, whom he met at Oxford, in 1956. These were the difficult, tormenting years of his career, when he was struggling to establish himself as a writer in London.

Born in the village of Chaguana, Trinidad, in August 1922, Naipaul grew up among impoverished Hindi-speaking Indians, who arrived in the Caribbean as indentured labour. His father, Seepersad, about whom he wrote with such comic

tenderness in his masterpiece *A House for Mr Biswas*, was a journalist on the *Trinidad Guardian*. He was also a frustrated writer, scribbling stories and sketches in stolen moments, in the chaos of rural Trinidad.

From the age of 12, the young Vidya knew he had to escape from Trinidad if he was to succeed. He was, like Seepersad, consumed by the dream of being a writer, something he perceived as a glorious, noble calling. In *Finding the Centre*, his memoir, he describes the writing life as "something that lay ahead and outside the life I knew — far from family and clan, colony, the *Trinidad Guardian*..."

But nothing prepared him for the suffering writing involves, how it must always come first. Early in life, Naipaul knew he would never be a father: "Children would have come between me

and the work." Yet he felt compelled to go on, even when his first four novels, including *Biswas*, were ignored. "I had no idea what the outline of the career would be: how you would have to do another and another book and how exhausted you would feel. If I had money, the work wouldn't have been written. Yet I had to do it."

"I got this very important scholarship, to Oxford, from the colonial government. This would have given me any kind of profession: medicine, the law, engineering. But I associated being a writer with my father, his private strength. I was full of the idea of the grandeur of the calling. Today it is not considered grand at all; it's about commerce."

For most of the 1950s, while discovering his voice, he was dejected and gloomy. "I was destitute. I never got any replies from

job applications. The BBC laughed me out of court when I asked for a little job in the talks department. The idea of a man like me writing for the BBC — absurd! I'm not complaining, you must understand. The writer shouldn't complain."

Naipaul often refers to himself as the "writer", as if he were discussing someone outside the room; or in an imperious third person. His speech is elaborate, ornate, rhythmic; he often repeats the ends of certain phrases.

The 1950s was a period, too, of immense sexual yearning. Unknown to his first wife, Pat, Naipaul was visiting prostitutes. Later, there was a mistress, an Anglo-Argentinian, an "immense passion" with whom he had perhaps the first fulfilling sex of his life. He thinks that Pat, who died in 1996, knew about his mistress but not the visits to prostitutes. And yet, in

1993, he made a reference to them in an interview in *The New Yorker*. He was, he explained, desperate to learn the art of seduction. "I was a very passionate man, wasn't I?" he asked. "I was incompetent. There were many girls who were friendly and I didn't know how to cope with it. I was untutored. I didn't know about the physical act of seduction, you see... so became a big prostitute man."

He regrets the interview. "It was very bad, very bad of me to have done that: don't know why I did. It caused her an immense amount of pain. I didn't want her to read the piece. I thought I would be able to keep it away from her. I didn't think it would get to her. They send me a copy of the magazine, but it comes prepackaged for disposal. One doesn't have to open it. But the *New Yorker* sent out little trailers. My wife got to hear what I said and..." He breaks off, shakes his head. He seems completely stunned. "Those little trailers travelled! They ever got to India."

Why did you mention the prostitutes in the interview?

"I was overcome by a feeling that I should speak clearly, without ambiguity about certain things."

Yet Pat had no idea about the prostitutes. "That must have wounded her," he says.

He remembers talking to her about Sir Allan Green, who in 1952, when he was the Director of Public Prosecutions, was discovered kerb-crawling in King's Cross his wife, Eva, later killed herself. "I said to my wife, 'I think it is wrong of the wife to overreact like this; his action isn't a rebuke to her.' Men and women, er, you know, there is a kind of tedium. But my wife disagreed. She thought that it was awful, awful. So you see, I shouldn't have spoken like this. It was a mistake."

"I've still not come to terms with my first wife's death," he says, dropping his head. "I gave her a hard time. I used to be full of rage and anger. We were poor and young together; I had these great rage which made me ill. I raged at her; and she was very good. It's something I have to deal with."

Do you feel guilty?

"It's grief, grief. My mother died — haven't mentioned her — and that didn't cause me the profound grief of my brother's death and now the grief about my first wife. I'm afraid we can't go into this, it was an incomplete marriage."

Naipaul, a gentle man, is perhaps too hard on himself. He already wears his suffering like a stigma. And now he has Nadira, who appears both to understand and accept him: "We should not expect great writers to be normal," she says. "I was reading yesterday about the writer Isaac Singer and all his sexual peccadillos I was shocked, disappointed, but perhaps this is the human cost of the writing life."

Naipaul, as his new book, *Beyond Belief: Islamic Excursions Among the Converted Peoples*, demonstrates again is indeed great. No other writer has his moral courage, his willingness to travel to find a subject, to listen and report, without prescription, the opinions of so-called ordinary people, this time Muslims in Iran, Pakistan and Indonesia.

His work — novels, reportage, autobiographical sketches, travelogue — is haunted by solitude, disciplined by a need to understand the complexities of the post-colonial world. He finds painful truths in the struggles of otherwise unacknowledged lives. In the canon of postwar British fiction, Naipaul is without peer — perhaps the only writer today in whom there are no echoes of *Influence*. Weary of the mechanics of fiction — plot, characterisation, suspense, he creates his own hybrid form of autobiography, fiction, reportage and social commentary. There is nothing quite like it.

"I am not aware of other styles of writing," he says. "I do my own, I write in my own way. I have no models. I always try to read very old writing, Elizabethan prose. I do this because words were then used with a freshness, they were not tainted. Today words are overused."

He was knighted in 1990, though does not use the title, and has won most major awards, including the Booker; but the Nobel still eludes him, his work being too uncompromising, idiosyncratic and politically unpredictable for the earnest Swedish Academy.

V.S. Naipaul, surveying a long, anguished writing life, feels that he is close to the end. "I'm calmer now, I have accepted the transitoriness of one's presence here. I'm glad I did the work, but not proud of it, no. Gauguin said a nice thing of the dying Vincent van Gogh; he said that he was sitting up in bed, smoking his pipe, hating nobody and full of love for his art. That's the way I feel: full of love for my art and at ease, at peace."

His face, for once, is a mask of serenity. *Beyond Belief* is published by Little, Brown at £20.

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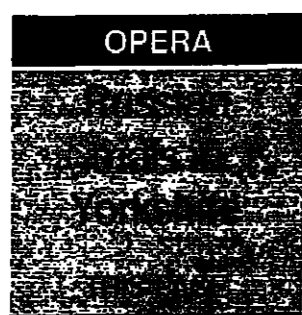
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Biographers' secrets fall into our laptops

It is curiously liberating when a distinguished practitioner of an art or craft — or any line of work, I suppose — declares that the end is nigh. They must know, surely, they of all people. What if Bellow declared the novel to be dead, or Pavarotti said there would be no more tenors, or Bergkamp asserted the end of football? We would all listen. So when Victoria Glendinning announced publicly the other day that biography as we have known it since Homer is about to change, perhaps utterly, we must pick up our knitting and rush to the guillotine.

Glendinning is a novelist, but she is also one of our leading biographers and "leads" in a field particularly talented and crowded in this country. Her studies include the lives of Trollope, Rebecca West, Vita Sackville-West and, imminently, Jonathan Swift. Her works are lucid, alive to the subject, highly admired and, I trust, bestsellers.

But at the Royal Geographical Society last week, in a discussion

with another distinguished biographer, Claire Tomalin (Jane Austen, Mary Shelley imminent) and umpired in a participating fashion by myself (Richard Burton — no other biography imminent or ever), Glendinning announced that a curtain, if not quite the final curtain, is about to fall on the traditional art of biography.

Her argument was that the CD-Rom and the Internet culture between them would do for it. When readers could call up and crawl up attractive byways and loll in seductive lay-bys of their own choosing, why should they follow an author? Say you were really interested in fashion and in what Austen and her friends and sisters wore and found that Tomalin did not spend as much time on this vital issue as you wished. What is to stop you calling in "Clothes — Early 19th Century, English Gen-

try" and luxuriating in as much material as you could find? Or, if you felt that for all his eloquence, Trollope had by no means satiated your obsession with church politics, why not drive into the electronic vaults of that subject and let the next chapter of the biography go bang?

You can see the attraction to some panting minds when the question of scatology and Dean Swift is raised. Who knows yet what Glendinning will provide, but for some it will never be enough — and off they could go in the Internet future to "Scatology Swiftian" or "Scatology Irish", with dollops of Joyce winking at the brim. This argument drew protests from Tomalin, who insisted that the book — the single, independent and researched view — would persist and prevail.

In the nature of these evenings



We did not pursue this point to the crux. But Glendinning's pronouncement has grown in interest the more I have thought about it. It coincides with much else that is going on. There is the undoubted

and unceasing move of people to be more in control of their own leisure and culture on every level. One of the characteristics of this century, in the Western world most markedly, has been the attempt of the many to get their hands on what was once the prize of the few. And the few have often been participants in art as well as followers or connoisseurs. Young ladies drew — often very well — and played the piano and wrote literary letters and novels and plays. Now more and more people do such things. A do-it-for-yourself biography would be irresistible to those who now see it as their fun and almost their right to be part of the action.

This does not mean the demise of the traditionally written biography — although Glendinning is in a far better position than I to judge that. But, at the very least, this

movement will introduce a competitive and parallel universe of biography. To be an author is the secret dream of every reader. To be able to author a book which would have authority is far too tempting to be rejected.

Biography also lends itself to multiple disciplines which, perversely, always attract the amateur. For a biography you need or you can call up a model of history; of intellectual debate; of geography; manners; religion; of the aspects of life which surround and give context to a character. A do-it-for-yourself biographer can play the field.

And then there is sex. Glendinning predicted that "all that feet of clay stuff" had had its day. It was a Sixties thing, she argued, opened up most deliciously by Michael Holroyd in Blooms-

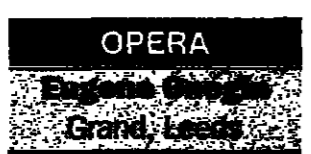
bury and essential then but no longer. "We are bored with all that," she said. "We know that people have affairs." Yet one of Tomalin's best lines was: "Ideally a subject should have had three great love affairs."

A final point about current biography not touched on at the debate is the problem I see confronting any biographer of a public figure in the future. The mass of material in several media is daunting. All major politicians now do an important part of their work with and through television and the footage must run into marathons. How is that to be culled, together with the plethora of journalism as well as the prepared speeches, the letters, the diaries, the chance observations, the gossip, the inexhaustible gossip? Perhaps Glendinning was also saying that biography would change dramatically because the information mountain is growing so fast that even the stoutest hearted would flinch and prefer the Internet.

Passion lost in the post

What looked very much like national Tchaikovsky week in Britain's opera houses ended little better than it started. After Scottish Opera's dim *Queen of Spades* came Opera North's equally lacklustre attempt at *Eugene Onegin*, in part redeemed by the exciting debut of the company's music director-elect, Steven Sloane. But in Leeds as in Glasgow we came out of the theatre in a state of puzzlement: how could these two hair-raising masterpieces be made to seem so uninteresting?

Part of the cause has to be money: both companies are miserably underfunded, and neither of these shows can be done on the cheap. For instance, they can't afford wigs, and if the men on stage stand around in vaguely 19th-century costumes with defiantly 20th-century haircuts, the impression of village-hall amateurism is inescapable. Ditto costumes: the quality of Sue Williamson's designs for *Onegin* is less significant than the fact that the fabrics looked cheap and they were made with good intentions rather than skill. Tatyana's dressing gown for her meeting in the park with Onegin should nev-



er have been allowed on a professional stage.

Giles Cadle's economy set-design presented a bare stage with minimal dressing. The omnipresent surtitle screen with no surtitles may have been an in-joke too subtle for me to grasp, but his skill in conjuring up a St Petersburg ballroom with a pair of curtains and a pediment was undeniable. Unfortunately the director, Dalia Ibelhauptaite, was too inexperienced to know how to fill the space convincingly, even with the help of Ian Spink's unimaginative choreography. Such basic matters as entrances and exits were clumsily handled, and of character and motivation there was little trace. "Ideas" like turning M Triquet into an amateur conjuror or having Gremin enter at the final curtain were no help, and shoving a single interval into the middle of Tchaikovsky's second act was a very, very bad idea indeed.

The homely cast, all taking great care to project the Lloyd-

Jones translation (lightly amended here and there), worked very hard. Alwyn Mellor, a lovely singer, was plainly out of sorts on Saturday. She looked as unhappy as she sounded as Tatyana. Peter Savidge sang soundly but played Onegin too old and blasé. Paul Nilon, most unflatteringly costumed, only intermittently found the honeyed tone for Lensky, and Frances McCafferty's old Nanny, while most beautifully sung, seemed too sophisticated and knowing. Norman Bailey's Gremin brought a welcome dose of gravitas and sheer knowhow to the otherwise hapless proceedings on stage.

You didn't have to agree with every choice Sloane made in the pit — dance rhythms a bit lightweight, conversational passages a bit pushed — but you certainly admired the way he knew precisely what he wanted, and got it. The English Northern Philharmonia played fabulously well for him, with gorgeously "fat" string tone, highly expressive wind phrasing, all most expertly balanced. In the final scenes Tchaikovsky's opera started to achieve lift-off, but it was a bit late.



Return to sender: a plainly out-of-sorts Alwyn Mellor does her best to deliver Tatyana's letter scene in Opera North's lacklustre *Eugene Onegin*

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AT&T

The Armaida Theatre at The Old Vic

AN end-of-season coasting bung over this London Symphony Orchestra concert. Some of the playing, especially from the strings was sweet and neat, and Sir Colin Davis's interpretations are never less than cogent. But neither Mendelssohn's *Scottish Symphony* nor Beethoven's *Eroica* set the pulse racing as they can do; and the latter was marred by mistakes that aren't supposed to happen in world-class ensembles.

Add to that the murk in which the Barbican (or is it the LSO?) now presents concerts, and you have a pretty pallid recipe for entertainment. I am all for dimming auditorium lights during the music to highlight the performers — but it is a novel idea to present the orchestra itself in the kind of 40-watt twilight some to be found in Romanian hotel lobbies during the Ceausescu years. Please, let there be light!

At least there was some enlightenment to be found in Davis's detailed and mature account of the *Scottish*. He took a broad and noble view of this not-very-Scottish work, which worked best when the cellos were soaring with mel-

Eroica minus heroics

CONCERTS

LSO/Davis

Barbican

low rapture through the big counter-melodies, or the flutes and clarines nimbly dancing through the scherzo.

What one missed was any sense of raw energy or bite in the attack, particularly in the wild chromatic scales at the end of the first movement (wild for Mendelssohn, anyway), or in the erupting lustiness of the finale. This was a performance wrapped in discretion and Scotch mist.

The *Eroica* was something of a mismatch. This of all symphonies is undeniably heroic in stature and tone, ever striving to break the bounds of the possible. But Davis's natural instinct is to shun all bombast and emphasise the humane and beautiful in music. Consequently, the massive first movement, though gracefully phrased, lacked any revolutionary dimension. Its heavy accents, its strident discords, its soaring melodic and harmonic twists — all was made as comfortable as a favourite armchair. It was seasoned music-making, but Beethoven surely wanted it to sound a bit more shocking.

What did shock was the horns' efforts in the scherzo's trio: an ill-tuned, blaring effort, culminating in a split top note. A dodgy flute at the most exposed part of the finale compounded the debilitating unease in the latter part of the performance.

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But in its best moments the evening had special congeniality. Voice and guitar worked well together in Schubert's

Schäfers Klage, where Holzmann's singing evoked all the heartache. Remarkable performances of Weber's *Die Zeit* and his attractive *Liebeszauber* made the Weber set the highlight.

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BANK OF ALIENS

Duisenberg makes a bad start to EMU

Europe's monetary union has not even formally begun, but already its total incompatibility with democratic principles as they are understood in Britain is becoming clear. In testimony presented to the European Parliament, Wim Duisenberg, the President-elect of the European Central Bank, and its five other directors have set out their proposed methods for the conduct of monetary policy in Europe. These have about as much in common with the political principles espoused by the British Government as the concepts of "democracy" practised in the former Soviet Union had with Westminster's parliamentary procedures.

which is now serving as a model for the global code of practice proposed by the International Monetary Fund. Mr Duisenberg says that the ECB will choose its own targets and may not even disclose what they are. Most importantly, it will publish no minutes and will never disclose how its directors voted. More precisely, such information may be disclosed after a minimum of 16 years, as Mr Duisenberg noted in what passed for a drily humorous remark.

THE LAST LESSON

A sacrifice in the cause of tolerance that Pakistan should heed

When John Joseph, Bishop of Faisalabad, shot himself in protest against Pakistan's discriminatory blasphemy laws, he acted within a Christian tradition of ultimate sacrifice. The evil he denounced was at work yesterday, with Christian houses being sacked by Muslim extremists even as thousands of mourners flocked to his funeral. Every so often, as with the suicide of Jan Palach, one individual's despairing protest can effect a political mutation. So it should be with the bishop's death.

lim. No one has yet been executed, because the prosecutions have collapsed in higher courts for lack of evidence. But knowing that some have then been murdered, the acquitted rarely dare to return home. According to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan: "People live in constant fear that they will be trapped by these laws; because once you are accused, there is no way of getting out."

CRACKLE ON THE LINE

Innovation in Radio 4 requires an attentive ear

Radio 4's schedule is part of the mental furniture of millions of Britons. Even the slightest alteration can irritate, let alone a comprehensive spring-clean. The attachment of the Radio 4 audience to the schedule it knows may irritate innovators in Broadcasting House, but it is inevitable.

discomforted listeners who find *The Archers* on too late, and the *Today* programme meandering into loose chat in an effort to hold their wandering attention.

Ethics concern on Sierra Leone affair

From Mr Roger Sainsbury
Sir, The concept of an ethical foreign policy is arguably mistaken. Its practice is bound to be fraught with uncertainty as to the greater or lesser good in a situation. As your leading article (May 8) see also leading article and letters, May 9) made clear, there was more than one way of interpreting the United Nations resolutions on Sierra Leone. In any case, ethics must often take primacy over narrow legalism.

Verdict on vanity of the 'guilty men'

From Mr Alistair B. Cooke
Sir, I have the greatest respect for John Redwood, a sentiment which Hywel Williams patently does not share (extracts from *Gully Men*, May 6, 7, 8; see also letter, May 8). I met Hywel, then a Rugby schoolmaster, in the 1980s when I was Deputy Director of the Conservative Research Department. He wanted my help in transforming himself from obscure teacher into party politician. He told me he had read about such people in the works of Maurice Cowling, his Cambridge mentor (and, as it happens, mine).

Museum to recall Holocaust horror

From Mr Maxwell Bruce, QC
Sir, Professor Joseph Rotblat's proposal (letter, May 4) for millennium museums dedicated to the two events that marked the nadir in this century of man's inhumanity deserves support. The Holocaust will surely not recur. But nuclear bombs remain with us, and for this reason a museum in Britain recalling Hiroshima and Nagasaki would be especially pertinent.

Young offenders

From Mr R. F. Lloyd
Sir, For the past 25 years this charitable trust, the Island Trust, has been sending disadvantaged young people sailing (letters, April 27 and 29), including offenders, those from special needs schools and those with aural or visual problems, as well as those who just cannot afford to go sailing.

Stuart succession

From Mr A. J. S. MacLennan
Sir, Magnus Linklater ("Return of the Jacobites", May 7), does not mention that when "Prince Charles's brother, Henry, Cardinal Duke of York" (King Henry IX) was dying in Italy in 1807 he made, by Act of Tanistry (ie, nomination), King George III his sole legal successor. The Stuart Crown Jewels were brought back from Rome as a result and still lie in the Crown Room in Edinburgh Castle.

Porn on the Net

From the General Secretary of the National Viewers' and Listeners' Association
Sir, The Government's plan to spend £600 million on connecting 8,000 schools to the Internet is, no doubt, well intentioned and aimed at equipping our children with necessary skills for the future.

Diamond smuggling

From Mr Julian Boles
Sir, Your report from South Africa (May 6) about diamond smuggling using pigeons makes it sound easy. As a dealer, I came across a credible story years ago about a miner on that Skeleton Coast who did try to steal diamonds by tying a sack of gems to a pigeon's foot. A police patrol found the exhausted bird outside the fence, nursed it back to health, and released it the next day.

Marathon winners

From Mr Patrick Howarth
Sir, The two London Marathon runners collecting on behalf of Whizz Kidz (letter, May 2) are right in their assessment of London tax drivers. A few years ago I asked a cab driver to take me to the Special Forces Club. He asked me some questions about the club and who was eligible to join. After I had explained he refused to accept payment.

Monsters in the home

From Mr P. H. F. Andrew
Sir, If reliance had been placed upon the somewhat limited number of urban ecthina in Australia to control timber attack by termites, as suggested by Baroness Gardner of Parkes (report, April 29; see also letter, May 1), much of the domestic housing in built-up areas would have collapsed.

Conserving bluebells

From Mr A. P. Bremer
Sir, Having evaded so far the beef on the bone and soft cheese police, how can I now escape the bluebell boys (article, April 25; letter, May 7)? My garden is overrun with the pests. They are a fast-spreading albeit pretty weed with a voracious appetite for space. I am about to embark upon my annual cull.

Letters to the Editor

Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

From the Reverend Canon Charles Taylor

Sir, If my experience is anything to go by, the company which offers to mount and frame published letters to the Editor would be able to target a far wider market by offering to provide the same enhancement for letters purporting to be from the Editor expressing his alleged interest in the correspondence but regretting his inability to publish it.

From the Director General of the Imperial War Museum

Sir, I warmly endorse Professor Rotblat's view that a Holocaust museum is long overdue in this country. However, as was reported in your pages on May 13, 1996, the Imperial War Museum is already planning a major permanent exhibition on the Holocaust as part of the third and final stage of its redevelopment programme.

Vertical text on the right edge of the page, possibly a page number or reference.

UNDER THE SKIN OF SPORT

ON APPEAL
Players call for bigger share of cricket's income
PAGE 34

GRAND FINALE
Bartle pips Todd to win Badminton title
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CRUISE CONTROL
Hakkinen races clear of rivals in Spanish grand prix
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STING IN THE TALE
Saracens give England food for thought
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TIMES SPORT

14 PAGES

MONDAY MAY 11 1998

SURVIVAL INSTINCT BRINGS RICH REWARD FOR EVERTON

Relief and anger grip Goodison

By OLIVER HOLT
FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

THEY ran on to the pitch like 5,000 David Pleats, hugging each other, happiness gripping them so tightly that they did not know what to do with themselves. Some just flung themselves to the ground, others took their shirts off and whirled them round in the air and raised their eyes to the heavens to give thanks for their deliverance.

They stood on the Goodison Park pitch in a great mass of relief. They let the rain that was falling wash away all their fears and frustrations. They hoisted the players that had been stranded out on the pitch on to their shoulders and carried them towards the sanctuary of the tunnel. And then, when it had finally begun to sink in that they were safe, they gave vent to their anger.

From the heart of a crowd that seethed with primitive feelings came a great chant. "We want Johnson out," they sang. "We want Johnson out." Their beleaguered chairman replied with a statement insisting that he would not quit, but they were still singing when Howard Kendall, drained and pale, climbed the stairs to the press room.

At the final whistle, Kendall, the Everton manager, who seemed more animated than he has ever done before, had leapt into the arms of Mickael Madar, his French striker, and performed his

- Bolton surrender 26
- Kendall's great escape 27
- Celtic joy tempered 29
- Charlton in charge 29
- Lynne Truss 30

own stilled impression of Pleat, greeting his players as they battled their way through the crowds, hugging them and slapping them on the back.

He and his team had had one shot at redemption and they had managed a bull's eye. With the weight of 44 years of unbroken service in the top division resting on their shoulders, they had ridden their luck and got the point that was all they needed, in the end, to send Bolton Wanderers down after they lost 2-0 at Chelsea.

Goals from Gianluca Vialli and Jody Morris had undone Colin Todd and his players just when it seemed that they had achieved enough to escape the drop and end their yo-yo pattern of existence in a purgatory between the FA Carling Premiership and the Nationwide League. Their relegation means that the three teams promoted from the first division last year went straight back down.

"It doesn't matter what I say to them in the dressing-room," Todd said, "because it will not make any difference. It was in our hands and we had our chances. We had shots kicked off the line and all sorts, but it would not come for us. It is a terrible thing to have happened but it is over now."

Kendall, though, was just grateful that Everton would not be spending what would have been only their fifth season outside the top division in the whole of their distinguished history. When he



Farrelly is mobbed by his team-mates after giving Everton the lead against Coventry and setting them on their way to survival in the Premiership. Photograph: Marc Aspland

spoke to the press, he promised the club's supporters that they would never again be put through such an ordeal as long as he was manager.

"All I know is that I do not want to go through that again," Kendall said. "This football club will not go through that while I am the manager here. The players, the coaching staff, the chairman, the fans, none of us want it to happen again and it won't."

"We were always conscious of the fact that if Bolton won at Chelsea it would be out of our hands. We were aware of the news that was coming through from Stamford Bridge and it was pleasing to say the least when it was confirmed. But the crowd were fantastic for us. There was never a negative thought in their minds."

"I have lived a lot over the last 12 months and I know what this club needs. I did not expect to get into a

situation where it all went down to the last game. Unfortunately, we did but we have survived and deservedly so. We will learn from that and we will make changes. As far as we are concerned, the future starts in July when we come back for pre-season."

It was the third time in the last decade that Everton have escaped relegation on the last day of the season. Four years ago, they beat Wimbledon 3-2 here to achieve it, but yesterday it was even closer. The point they won meant that they had stayed up on goal difference, just three better than Bolton's.

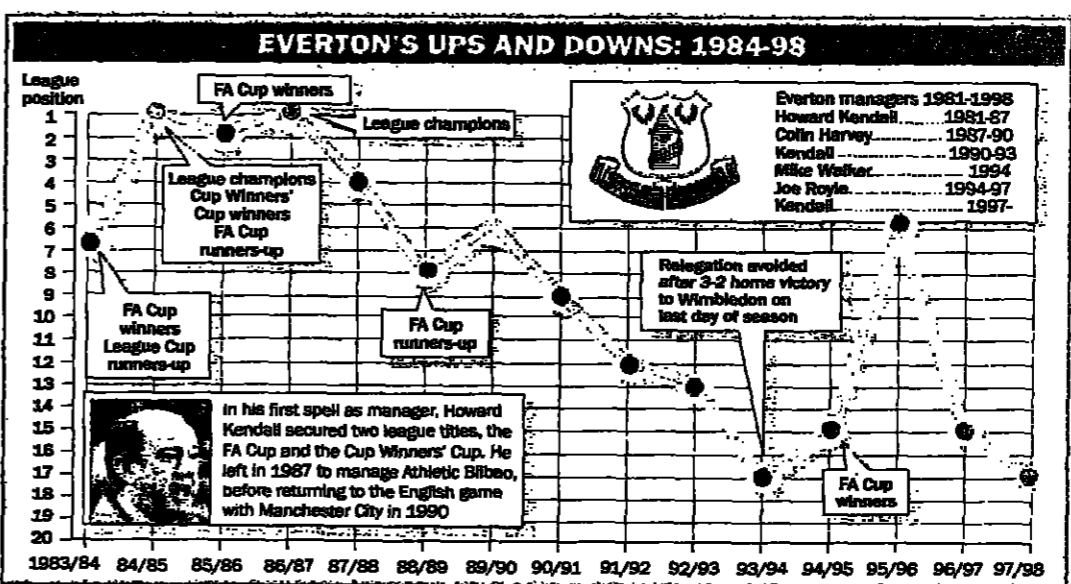
Bolton will have bittersweet memories of the goal that wasn't. The Gerry Taggart effort against Everton at the Reebok Stadium that had crossed the line but was not given. Kendall just dismissed talk of that by saying that Neville Southall, their goalkeeper that day,

had been fouled in the preamble anyway so the goal should not have stood.

Evertonians did not care about that yesterday. When they had finished demonstrating against Johnson, they fled out into the terraced streets around Goodison Park. Some rang friends and relatives on mobile phones and went their relief into them. Others just stood, as if bemused, in the rain.

The Liverpool Echo shelved the 16-page relegation special it had been planning, the supporters ran off with great clumps of the pitch and, on the steps of St Luke's church, next to the Gwladys Street end, the vicar stood on the steps, a scarf shrouding his dog collar and a blue and white peaked cap covering his head.

Everton, it seems clear now, must have God on their side.



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FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP

Table with columns for team names (ASTON VILLA, BARNSELEY, BIRMINGHAM, CHELSEA, etc.) and match details.

Table with columns for team names (BOLTON, CRYSTAL PALACE, DERBY, EVERTON, etc.) and match details.

OVERSEAS

Table with columns for league names (ITALIAN LEAGUE, FRENCH LEAGUE, GERMAN LEAGUE, etc.) and player statistics.



Table with columns for HOME and AWAY teams and their respective statistics.

Table with columns for PREMIER DIVISION and statistics.

Table with columns for FIRST DIVISION and statistics.

Table with columns for SECOND DIVISION and statistics.

Table with columns for THIRD DIVISION and statistics.

Table with columns for GOALSCORERS and player names.



PLAY-OFFS

Table with columns for Semi-finals, First division, and Second division.

PREMIER DIVISION

Table with columns for team names (CELTIC, DUNDEE UNITED, HEARTS, etc.) and match details.

FIRST DIVISION

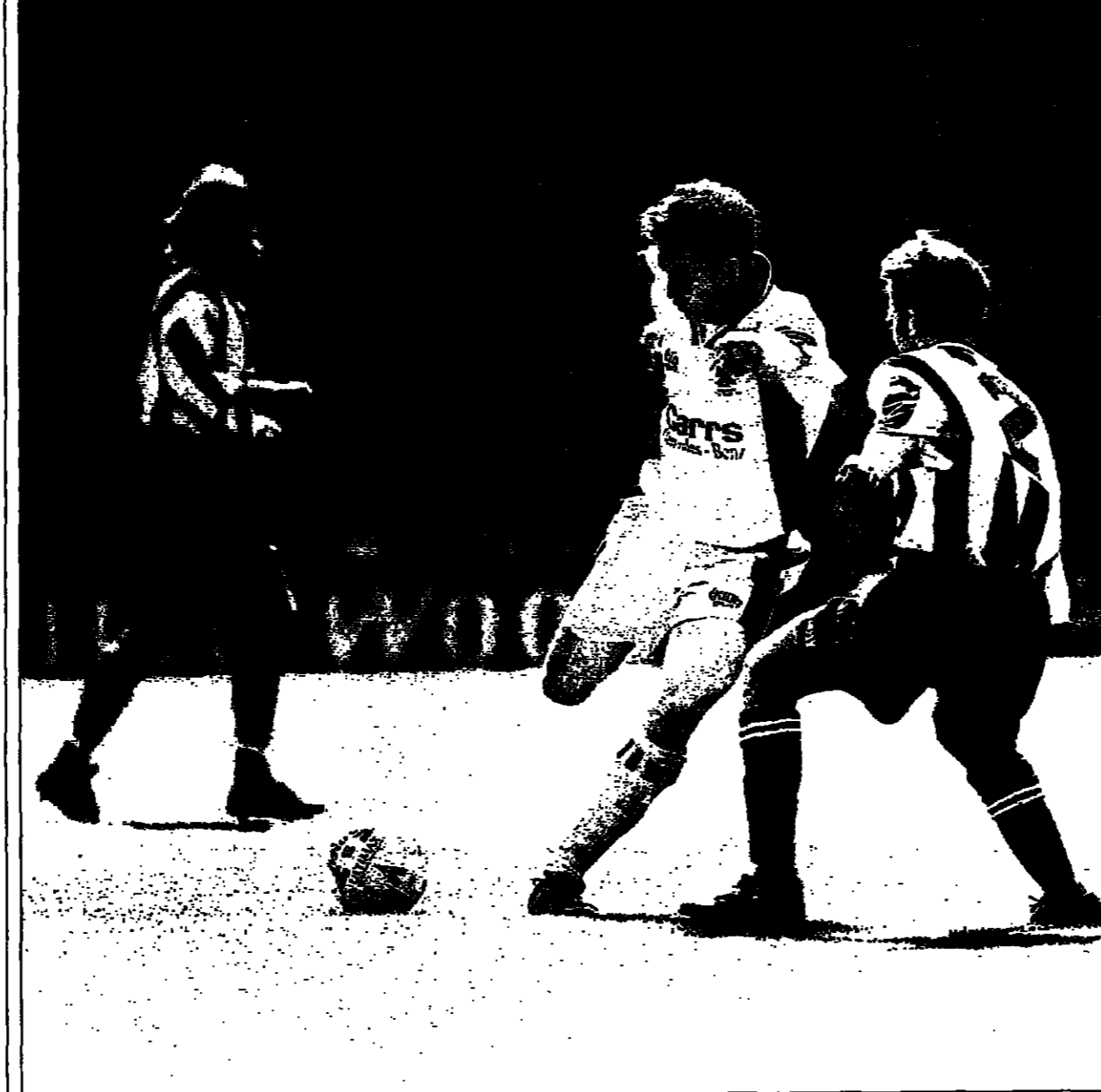
Table with columns for team names (FALCON, GORTON, HAMILTON, etc.) and match details.

SECOND DIVISION

Table with columns for team names (BRECHIN, CLYDE, EAST FIFE, etc.) and match details.

THIRD DIVISION

Table with columns for team names (ALBION, ARBROATH, DUMFRIES, etc.) and match details.



Steve Daly, of Tiverton Town, attempts to shoot past Stephen Pickering, of Tow Law Town, during the FA Carlsberg Vase at Wembley on Saturday.

NON-LEAGUE AND NATIONAL LEAGUES

Table listing various non-league and national leagues and their details.

GUIDE TO THE WEEK AHEAD

Large table with columns for TODAY, FOOTBALL, CRICKET, RUGBY UNION, and other sports events.

AUSTRALIAN POOLS RESULTS

Table with columns for VICTORIA LEAGUE, WESTERN AUSTRALIA LEAGUE, and other pool results.

POOLS CHECK

Table with columns for pool numbers and corresponding results.

Large vertical advertisement for Jansen featuring a portrait of Kevin Jansen and promotional text.

Advertisement for Audi A6 Avant featuring a car image and promotional text.

Kevin McCarran believes the end of Rangers' monopoly is healthy for Scottish football

Jansen's likely departure tempers Celtic's joy

When Harald Brattbak's goal clinched the 2-0 victory over St Johnstone...



Larsson celebrates his goal, which put Celtic on the way to their 2-0 home win over St Johnstone and the premier division championship.

Their reaction owed much to an antipathy towards Rangers, but there are respectable reasons, too, for satisfaction.

Wim Jansen, the head coach, was appointed only in July of last year and no signings could be made until he had taken charge.

many newcomers have been assimilated and assembled into a rigorously organised side. It is the Dutchman's system that has proved to be the first effective bulwark against terrible pressures.

Rangers were beating Dundee United 2-1. Although St Johnstone posed little threat, their regular advances into Celtic's half after the interval were enough to spark hysteria in the crowd.

Boyd was calm enough to pause before releasing his chip at the perfect moment. Jackie McNamara's low cross was true and Brattbak shot home confidently.

almost inevitable that he will exercise an option clause and part company with Celtic in the next few days.

stinginess. Some supporters consider him to be a desiccated figure in whom prudence has taken the place of ambition.

He has dragged the club back from bankruptcy, built a stadium that generates the greatest attendance figures the club has known and ensured a return to the European Cup.

Table with columns: P, W, D, L, F, A, Pts. Rows for Celtic and Rangers, and a list of championship records.

broadcasting rights compared to their counterparts in England. When McCann took over, in 1994, Celtic were £9 million in debt and he will not tolerate a return to that ruinous condition.

FOOTBALL: IPSWICH AND SUNDERLAND MUST OVERCOME FIRST-LEG DEFICITS TO REACH WEMBLEY AND SUSTAIN PREMIERSHIP AMBITIONS

Borbokis handed his shot at glory

Sheffield United 2 Sunderland 1

HISTORY shows that the play-offs rarely favour the highest finishers and Sunderland did their best to support the theory by throwing away a comfortable lead yesterday in a match that they dominated.

Sunderland were allowed to dominate the half completely and had the chance to stretch out of sight. Ball almost scored a second, but his goalmouth shot was blocked by Dichio, his team-mate.

Charlton seize initiative before red mist descends

Ipswich Town 0 Charlton Athletic 1

IPSWICH Town and Charlton Athletic are noted for espousing the finer points of the beautiful game. Not for them the black, cynical approach that increasingly blinds the Nationwide League in which they live and breathe.

series of end-of-season fixturs on which so much hangs, perhaps it was Ipswich's frustration at not being able to penetrate a defence that has now not conceded a goal for 12 hours.

Fulham are poor value

Fulham 1 Grimsby Town 1

Moody's nasty, red-carded foul sending Mark Lever, who promptly and gratefully knocked it into the net.

Common sense should have suggested that Lever had no chance of coming back, but an evident lack of communication between physiotherapist and manager on opposite sides of the field led to the hiatus.

Varley fulfils burning ambition

Tiverton Town 1 Tow Law Town 0

MISSION accomplished. Tiverton Town fulfilled the ambition they have pursued since losing to Bridlington Town in the 1993 final by carrying the FA Carlsberg Vase back to Devon from Wembley on Saturday.

that had started brightly but had become laboured as legs tired in the heat. Varley, a trainee teacher in Exeter, had played much of the season in attack but lost his place in the starting line-up to Kevin Smith, the captain, fit after an injury-troubled season.



Bright, left, and Jones celebrate Charlton's goal

Bright, left, and Jones celebrate Charlton's goal. Charlton Athletic are noted for espousing the finer points of the beautiful game.

Hayles on target as Rovers take control

Bristol Rovers took a huge step towards the Nationwide League second division play-off final with a 3-1 home win over Northampton Town yesterday.

first leg at Scarborough, Torquay United gained the upper hand with a 3-1 victory. Rodney Jack, the Jamaica striker, gave the visitors a 22nd-minute lead, only for Jason Ricketts to equalise five minutes before half-time.

Advertisement for Forthcoming Company Golf Days, listing various golf courses and dates.

CRICKET

Warwickshire bid bizarre farewell to one cup too many

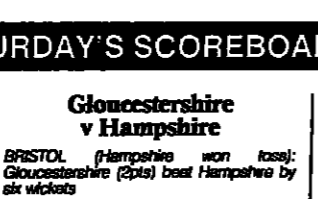
By MICHAEL HENDERSON

THE Benson and Hedges Cup, which has helped to usher in the cricket season since 1972, will disappear shortly down the plughole of history and few players or spectators will shed many tears. For some years, it has been seen as an unnecessary diversion, a cup competition too many, even though the final, at the height of summer, often provided a good game.

After the results on Saturday conspired to deny Warwickshire a place in the quarter-finals, it is just as well that the game is kissing it goodbye. Warwickshire won four of their group games and yet they could not progress, falling less than a single short of Lancashire on the overall net run-rate difference. Lancashire, who beat Northamptonshire at Old Trafford by 71 runs, join Leicestershire, the group leaders, in the last eight.

In the excitement of the moment on Saturday night, nobody was quite sure what was going on. Everywhere, the calculators were out, as scorers, players, committeemen and spectators pored over sets of figures. In fact, the matter still requires confirmation this morning from the England and Wales Cricket Board.

The Lancashire victory was adorned by another ferocious innings by Andrew Flintoff, the 20-year-old all-rounder who is becoming the most talked-about young player since Ben Hollis. If Flintoff's doggy back enabled him to bowl properly, then he, like Hollis a year ago, would be promoted to the England one-day side. He might not be too far short of the Test side.



Flintoff: England potential

On Saturday, he led Lancashire on the way to victory with a merry blitz, crowning his innings of 92 with three sixes and falling on his sword as he sought another. Michael Asherton, meanwhile, fell second ball, caught at the wicket as he tried to hook Franklyn Rose. Asherton may be fed up with people reminding him how few runs he is scoring, but, as he knows, the only way to shut them up is by making a hundred or two.

Lancashire have won the cup four times, more than any other county. Behind them, on three wins apiece, are Kent and Leicestershire and, as they are all through to the quarter-finals, at least the competition is taking its leave in a suitable way. The other teams involved are Middlesex and Surrey, who have won it twice. Yorkshire and Essex, winners once, and Durham, for whom a quarter-final place is terra incognita.

Surrey will take some whacking. They won their five group games with something to spare and have strength in depth. Middlesex made it four wins out of four when they won in Cardiff, where Keith Brown made his second hundred in this year's competition.

Warwickshire eventually beat Nottinghamshire at Edgbaston, though it was closer than seemed likely when the visitors' score stood at 66 for five. There were five runs in it at the end and, by making more than 200 in reply, Nottinghamshire had done Lancashire a friendly turn.

Mayson forced into hard career choice

SPORT IN SCHOOLS

By JOHN GOODBODY



Mayson, the England Under-18 golfer, has turned his back on school cricket

UNTIL the sudden warmth of the weekend, it had been a wretched start to the cricket season. This has made the decision of Chris Mayson to concentrate on golf this year rather than cricket easier to endure.

As an England Under-18 golfer, with the prospect of a glittering future in the game, it was perhaps inevitable, yet there was more than a twinge of sadness as he talked on Saturday while watching the first XI of his school, Bedford, show commendable enterprise to defeat Rugby by eight wickets. Mayson, 17, would almost certainly have been in the team. Last season, he was a member of the senior first XI squad and he has been in the county team in several age groups.

There were other technical reasons why cricket, unlike hockey, did not blend well with golf. "Hitting a hockey ball is a completely different action from the other two sports because you roll your wrists over," Mayson said. "Hockey helps me keep fit and builds my upper body."

Everything away with your shoulders. Even in bowling, I was rolling my shoulders too much." Given his talent, it was clearly inadvisable to try to alter the groove of his golf swing. Last year, Mayson lost the national schools' title by only one stroke and finished second in the English under-18 strokeplay championships at Moor Park, when he was three under par for the four

rounds. He has two more years in his age category. He plays golf five times a week, off a handicap of one and looks forward to the possibility of getting a scholarship to an American university, hopefully at Stanford California, or the University of Virginia.

Mayson would certainly have relished the chase for runs on Saturday as Bedford set off with gusto to overthrow the Rugby total of 151. To say that Rugby batted slowly would be to err ludicrously on the side of charity. Their innings began at 11.30am and almost 84 overs later, scoring a declaration, they were all out for 151, a rate well under two runs an over. Ben Machiose was the top scorer with 34. Chris Graham went three for 17, and Jamie Shaw, with three for 33, were the most successful Bedford bowlers.

SATURDAY'S SCOREBOARDS

Table with cricket scores for Benson and Hedges Cup, British Universities v Kent, and Glamorgan v Middlesex.

Table with cricket scores for Gloucestershire v Hampshire, Lancashire v Northamptonshire, and Glamorgan v Middlesex.

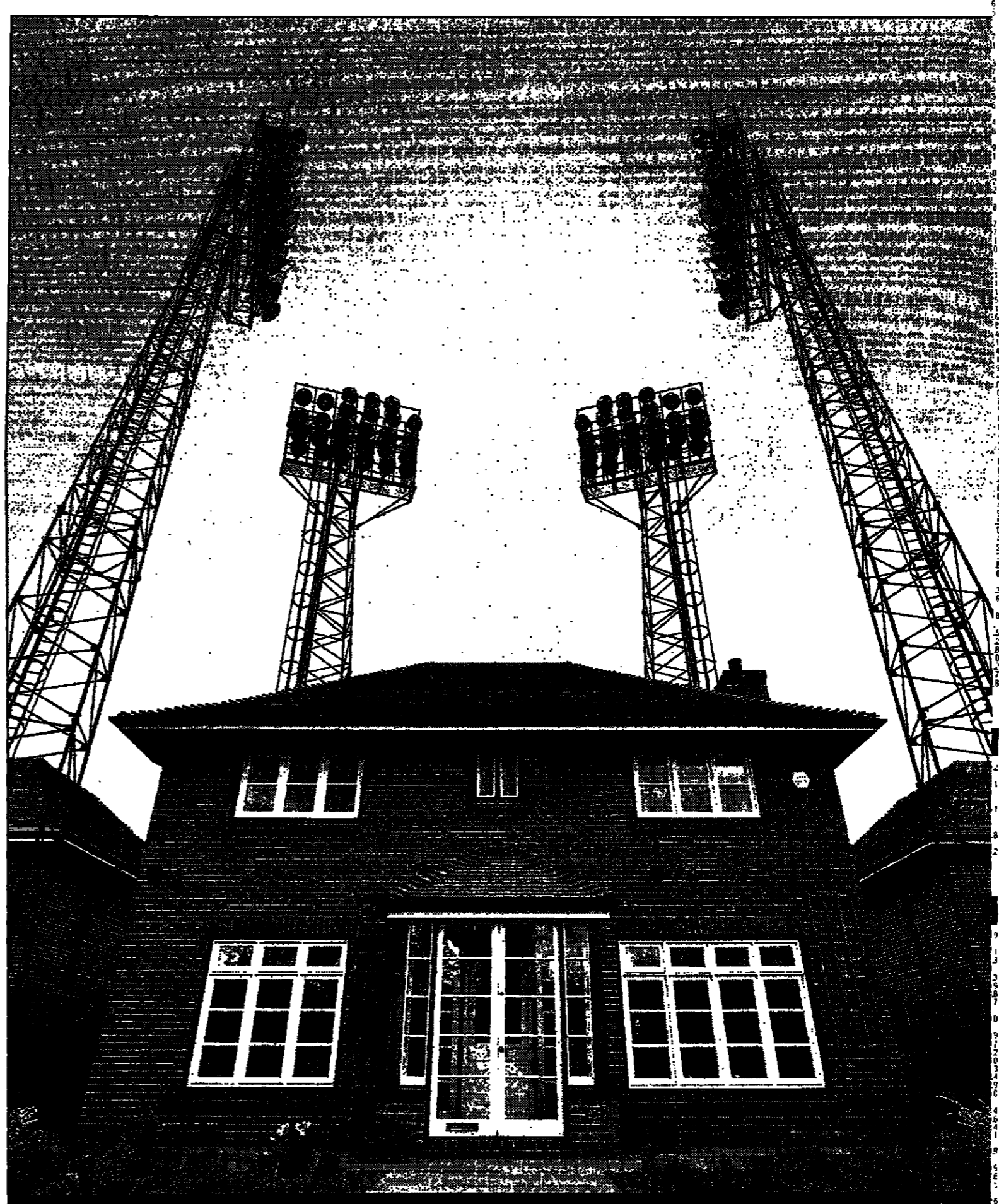
Table with cricket scores for Warwickshire v Nottinghamshire, Lancashire v Northamptonshire, and Glamorgan v Middlesex.

Table with cricket scores for Glamorgan v Middlesex, Lancashire v Northamptonshire, and Glamorgan v Middlesex.

Table with cricket scores for Lancashire v Northamptonshire, Glamorgan v Middlesex, and Glamorgan v Middlesex.

Table with cricket scores for Glamorgan v Middlesex, Glamorgan v Middlesex, and Glamorgan v Middlesex.

Table with cricket scores for Final Group Tables, Group A, Group B, Group C, and Group D.



Advertisement for Granada World Cup tickets with text: 'Bring the World Cup back home. For only £6... Call 0800 16 15 15 or visit your local shop.'

Capitalisation, week's change

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Table listing alcoholic beverage stocks with columns for company name, price, and change.

BANKS

Table listing bank stocks with columns for company name, price, and change.

BREWERS, PUBS & REST

Table listing brewery, pub, and restaurant stocks with columns for company name, price, and change.

BUILDING MATERIALS

Table listing building materials stocks with columns for company name, price, and change.

CHEMICALS

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ENGINEERING VEHICLES

Table listing engineering and vehicle stocks with columns for company name, price, and change.

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

Table listing food manufacturer stocks with columns for company name, price, and change.

HEALTHCARE

Table listing healthcare stocks with columns for company name, price, and change.

HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT

Table listing household goods and textile stocks with columns for company name, price, and change.

INSURANCE

Table listing insurance stocks with columns for company name, price, and change.

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

Table listing investment trust stocks with columns for company name, price, and change.

LEISURE & HOTELS

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MEDIA

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Mining

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Oil & Gas

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PROPERTY

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TELECOMMUNICATIONS

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TRANSPORT

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OTHER FINANCIAL

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PHARMACEUTICALS

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SUPPORT SERVICES

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PRINTING & PAPER

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BRITISH FUNDS

Table listing British funds with columns for fund name, price, and change.

SHORTS (under 5 years)

Table listing short-term bonds with columns for bond name, price, and change.

LONGS (over 15 years)

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RETAILERS FOOD

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RETAILERS GENERAL

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ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

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WATER

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Vertical advertisement on the left side of the page, featuring the text 'Rushten will a rematch' and 'breaks down'.

Vertical text on the right edge of the page, possibly a page number or margin note.

AN EXCLUSIVE TIMES NEWSPAPERS FLIGHT OFFER AND PRIZE DRAW

FLY BRITISH MIDLAND FROM £60 RETURN



To celebrate British Midland's Diamond Jubilee, *The Times* offers you the chance to make big savings on return flights to 15 destinations throughout the UK and Europe, see the table right. Prices start from as little as £60 return and you could save as much as £39 on your ticket compared with British Midland's lowest published fares. British Midland has more than 1,500 flights a week serving 28 destinations throughout the UK and Europe. It was voted Best European Short-Haul Airline 1997

- Flights to 15 destinations throughout the UK and Europe from just £60 return, per person
- Choose from nine airports in Britain and Ireland
- Enjoy two nights away or more
- Fly between July 6 and December 17, 1998

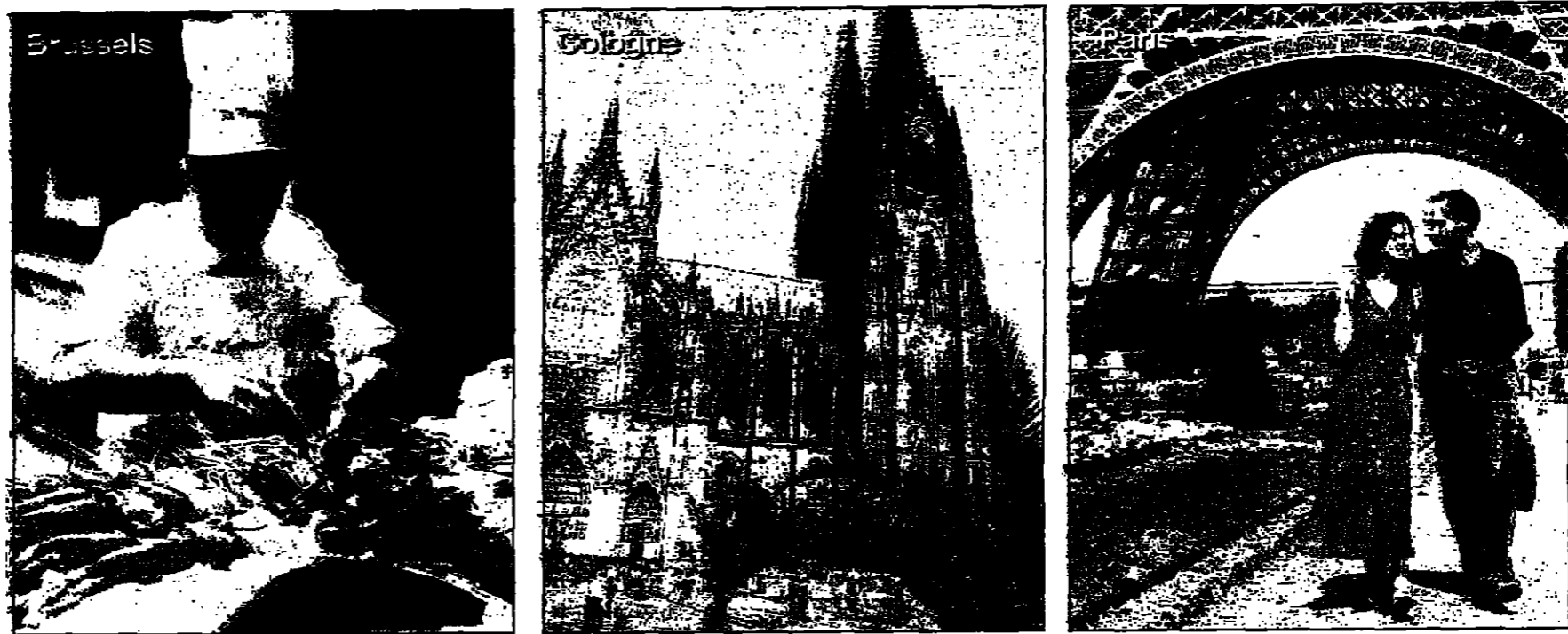
HOW TO APPLY

You can fly from London Heathrow to Dublin for just £60 return. To Paris the return fare from Heathrow or East Midlands is only £67 and a ticket to Amsterdam costs just £68. From Edinburgh or Glasgow you can take a return flight to London for only £60, or fly to Paris for just £117 and to Cologne for only £142. From Belfast, Leeds/Bradford, Manchester and Teesside you can make a trip to Amsterdam for only £118, or visit Frankfurt for only £145. To take advantage of this unbeatable offer simply start collecting your British Midland tokens today. You need to collect 12 differently numbered tokens, 10 from *The Times* and two from *The Sunday Times*. A total of 15 tokens will be printed: 12 in *The Times* until Saturday, May 23 and three in *The Sunday Times* between May 10 and May 24. Application forms will appear in *The Times* tomorrow and on Saturday and in *The Sunday Times* next week. One application is valid for two return tickets. Only one application per person and two applications per household are permitted.

Applications must be received at the address stated on the form by Friday, June 5, 1998. You will then receive a fulfilment pack with a British Midland discount-flight voucher, a timetable and full details of how to book your tickets. Allow 28 days for delivery of your fulfilment pack. Bookings must be made between Monday, June 22 and Friday, July 31, 1998, at least 14 days before you wish to travel. All flights must originate from the UK or Dublin. All flights to Europe are via Heathrow or East Midlands. This offer is open to UK and Republic of Ireland residents only. It is subject to availability, so book early. The offer is for a minimum two-night stay and two people must travel together. No travel is permitted on any Sunday or on flights departing after 2pm on any Friday. Full terms and conditions appear in Sport.

THE TIMES

UK AND EUROPE FLIGHT OFFER TOKEN 1



DESTINATIONS	Heathrow	Belfast	East Midlands	Edinburgh	Glasgow	Leeds/Bradford	Manchester	Teesside	Dublin (excl tax)
Amsterdam	£68	£118	£68	£118	£118	£118	£118	£118	£100
Belfast	£60	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Brussels	£69	£119	—	£119	£119	£119	£119	£119	£100
Cologne	£92	£142	—	£142	£142	£142	£142	£142	£125
Dublin	£60	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
East Midlands	—	—	—	£60	£60	—	—	—	—
Edinburgh	£60	—	£60	—	—	—	—	—	—
Frankfurt	£95	£145	—	£145	£145	£145	£145	£145	£125
Glasgow	£60	—	£60	—	—	—	—	—	—
Heathrow	—	£60	—	£60	£60	£60	£60	£60	£50
Leeds/Bradford	£60	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Manchester	£60	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Paris	£67	£117	£67	£117	£117	£117	£117	£117	£100
Prague	£153	£203	—	£203	£203	£203	£203	£203	£175
Teesside	£60	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Prices quoted are return per person. UK departures include air passenger duty plus foreign taxes. Prices quoted for Dublin departures exclude tax. All prices are correct at time of going to press, but foreign levied taxes are subject to exchange rate fluctuations. Prices applicable only when two people travel together

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complete

CHANGING TIMES

MONDAY MAY 11 1998

Factories to dismiss 5% of workers, ITEM says

By Alasdair Murray, Economics Correspondent

MANUFACTURERS are set to lose about 5 per cent of their workforces as Britain enters a sharp economic downturn, a new report claims.

The Ernst & Young ITEM club forecast, which uses the Treasury's own model of the economy, says that "prevarication and inaction by the Chancellor and the Bank of England" has failed to re-stimulate booming consumer activity.

As a result, the Bank will have to make at least one more interest rate rise to curb the strong housing market while the high pound will continue to wreak havoc on the country's manufacturing base.

ITEM predicts unemployment will climb to 1.5 million next year and rise towards 2 million in the early part of the next decade.

GDP growth will slip to 1.5 per cent next year, and not recover to 2.2 per cent until 2002. However, it says inflation will be back on target by the end of the year.

A further warning that UK interest rates might not have peaked is provided by Michael Dicks, UK economist at Lehman Brothers, who calculates the true level of GDP is around 2.5 per cent higher than official estimates. He says the official data, in contrast to other business surveys, has tended to underestimate the pace of economic growth and is more gloomy than the reality.

Even in the most recent

quarter, GDP may have increased by around 0.75 per cent, compared with an official estimate of 0.4 per cent. This would imply that the economy is now running well above its capacity to grow without causing inflation and that the Bank will need to make further rate rises to cool it down.

Directors pay rose more than twice as fast as the national average, an Institute of Management survey says.

Average earnings rose 4 per cent last year while directors enjoyed an average rise of 10.2 per cent, up from 7.9 per cent in 1996. Pay for other senior executives rose 7.2 per cent — a seven year high — managers' by 6.9 per cent.

The Treasury is likely to be concerned by the figures as the Chancellor has warned the private sector repeatedly that wage inflation could force up interest rates.

The Institute said the pay packages are due to a rise in corporate profitability, with bonuses making up around 17 per cent of executive pay compared with 12.8 per cent two years ago.

Roger Young, the director general of the IoM, said: "Management increases are an indicator of the success of Britain's companies and the competitiveness of UK plc."

The report says management redundancies are 1.3 per cent, the lowest for more than ten years, and 25 per cent of companies claim that they have recruitment problems.

Substance is needed from the world's summiteers



ROGER BOOTLE

Birmingham is once again the centre of the industrial world. Well, it will be next weekend, anyway. The international summit roadshow moves on to the meeting of the so-called G8, (the G7 plus Russia), when the leaders of the world's biggest economies will discuss "employability, international crime and the global economy". On past form, you shouldn't hold your breath. Such occasions often generate most interest in what the assembled dignitaries have to eat. But Birmingham needs to be a summit of substance.

The world economy is entering a new and dangerous phase. Over recent years, it has been held together by strong growth in the United States and its Anglo-Saxon acolytes (including Britain), helped by a sustained boom in the Far East, ex Japan.

Meanwhile, the European Union, transfixed by the lure of the single currency, has experienced prolonged slow growth, while Japan has been trapped in a dire recession. The result has been growth well below the world's potential.

Behind the facade of international co-operation, a game of musical chairs has been played out in the foreign exchange markets, and how countries have fared has depended upon where they have been when the music stopped. It all started in 1992 when the krona, marka, lira, peseta, escudo, and the pound all succumbed to speculative pressure, soon followed by the Irish punt. Two

years later, the Mexican peso collapsed.

In all these cases, devaluation was not so much chosen by the "victims" as thrust upon them. But in each case, despite the initial gloom, the effect was the same — a boost to export performance and a recovery in the economy overall. For in today's world, currency devaluations work in marked contrast to the inflationary 1970s when all they did was to propel the devaluators to still higher rates of inflation.

What's more, the importance of a competitive currency is now widely recognised. In 1994, China devalued, thereby gaining a significant advantage in world markets. Soon afterwards, the yen was allowed to slide, making Japan more competitive. In Europe, the supposedly hawkish Bundesbank acquiesced in a sharp fall of the mark which improved competitiveness not only for Germany but also for all those countries whose currencies were tied to the mark.

Last year, seven Asian currencies wilted under a big speculative attack. The signs are that domestic demand in these countries is devastated — but their trade balances will

sustain a dramatic improvement. Meanwhile, the Japanese situation looks even more desperate and the Chinese authorities are having to grapple with a weakening economy, rising unemployment, and an inflation rate apparently about to turn negative.

So the euro has been launched when the world is confronting an emerging deflationary crisis, disguised by the continuing game of musical chairs, but held in check only by the strength of the US economy. Now there are signs that the US economy may soon start to weaken. For the bond market vigilantes, still crazy after all these years,

this may appear to be good news. But it is exactly the opposite for the world economy. In particular, it could set off another round of currency weakness in the Far East.

In this environment, it becomes vital that Euroland sustains a decent recovery, not only for Europe but also for the world as a whole. On past form, relying on Europe to generate strong demand looks a forlorn hope. Fortunately, there are now signs that she is staging a significant, though unspectacular, cyclical recovery. But will the euro's guardians give the recovery a chance to flourish? The danger is that they will be so concerned to pay due homage to the god "credibility" that they will act too hastily to restrain a recovery by imposing higher interest rates, and too slowly to resist a downturn by lowering them.

Yet does the European Central Bank (ECB) not face a serious risk of higher inflation if it allows the incipient recovery full rein? For the immediate future, there is about as much chance of an inflationary problem in core Europe as of a Dutchman serving a full eight-year term as ECB president. Inflation in France and Germany is now close to

1 per cent — even according to the excessively pessimistic official figures. The advent of the euro will itself enhance competitive pressures which will tend to reduce inflation. If it strengthens on the foreign exchanges, then inflation in core Europe may well turn negative.

Of course, the hawks will say that inflation in Europe is currently low simply as a result of subdued demand and that once the economy shows a decent recovery, inflation will pick up smartly. But haven't we heard this argument somewhere before? The US experience over several years is exactly the opposite. Once inflation psychology is broken, with increased competition at home and abroad, the economy can be pushed further without generating inflationary pressure. If it is given the chance, the European economy may be about to enjoy several years of above-trend growth, thereby leading to falls in unemployment, without higher inflation. But, given the state of the world economy, it needs to — and not simply by taking advantage of a weak euro.

So let us hope that amidst all the photo-opportunities allowing political leaders to show off to their electorates back home, and the chance for the hosts to show off the wonders of "New British" cuisine, the coming weekend's shenanigans in Birmingham allow plenty of time for matters of real substance. Rarely has the world needed economic leadership more than now — and especially from Europe.

CARLING
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BELL'S
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SPORTS SERVICE

Hazlewood opens new factory

By Sarah Cunningham

HAZLEWOOD FOODS is to celebrate National Sandwich Week by opening a factory employing 600 people.

The 50,000 sq ft factory, in Park Royal, West London, is part of Hazlewood's acquisition of the Breadwinners company and will be opened by the Earl of Sandwich.

Sandwiches now represent about 10 per cent of Hazlewood's business and the total UK market, worth £2.6 billion a year, is growing more than 5 per cent a year.

The factory will supply Tesco, Sainsbury and company restaurants. The most popular sandwiches are tuna and cucumber, prawn mayonnaise, egg and cress, chicken sale, ploughman's, and bacon, lettuce and tomato.

Banbury top for prosperity

By Martin Waller

THE market town of Banbury in North Oxfordshire is the most prosperous place in the country. Pakistan, by contrast, is the worst place in the world to do business.

A Dart & Bradstreet survey has identified Banbury as having the highest proportion — 90.6 per cent — of profit-making businesses in Britain. It has been helped by proximity to the M40 and a pleasant environment. Unemployment is 2 per cent — and falling. Preston is second because motorways put it within two hours of half the population.

Pakistan is identified as the riskiest country for overseas investors by Merchant International Group, a consultant. It is followed by Ukraine, Indonesia and Russia.

Virgin cinemas for US

By Chris Ayres

VIRGIN Entertainment, the cinemas-to-megastores branch of Richard Branson's sprawling business empire, plans to invest up to £150 million building lavish European-style multiplexes in Japan and the US.

Simon Burke, the company's chief executive, has told *The Times* that he wants to capitalise on falling property

prices in Japan and the poor state of many ageing cinemas in big US cities.

The company plans to invest £100 million in Japan, about half of which is expected to come from borrowings. Mr Burke aims to have 20 cinemas in the region by 2002.

Meanwhile, Virgin is planning a £50 million multiplex investment in major US cities including Los Angeles, New York and San Francisco.

WORD-WATCHING

- Answers from page 38
- VINAROS**
(b) In March, 1938, in Spain, Franco launched an offensive through Aragon into Catalonia. Troops under Davila attacked, supported by aerial bombing from Tervel. By April 3, they had driven 60 miles, taking Lerida. Then followed the attack on Vinaros, which split the Republican forces in two.
- KORFBALL**
(a) A field ballgame popular in Holland. It is similar to netball enlarged and played indoors or out. The field is 40 x 20 metres enlarged and played indoors. There are two baskets on poles inside the playing area. Teams are mixed, men and women.
- ISOPACHYTE**
(a) An isopachyte is a line on a geological map connecting points of equal thickness in a specific rock stratum, aquifer or other deposit. It is a contour of equal thickness. Data for setting up an isopachyte map is obtained from boreholes, wells, outcrops or geophysical surveys.
- MACHAIR**
(a) Level sandy grass sward that has developed over a long period by the accumulation of blown sand behind coastal sand dunes. It occurs typically in the Hebrides and on the northwest coast of Scotland.
- SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE**
1... Qxe2; 2. fxe3 Nc3+; 3. Kh2 Nd1+; 4. Kh1 Ng3+; 5. Kh2 Ne4+; 6. g3 Rf2+; 7. Kh1 Nxe3 checkmate.

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Why you should discount what our competitors say about discounts.

Every retailer and manufacturer who has ever been successful in business knows that the secret to success is not in the products, but in the way they are sold. It's not about the quality of the goods, but about the value you offer your customers. And that value is often found in the form of a discount.

Our competitors are always talking about discounts. They say they offer the best prices, the lowest prices, the best value for money. But what do they really mean? Are they really offering discounts, or are they just trying to lure you away from their competitors? The truth is, they're not. They're just trying to make you feel like you're getting a deal.

At BT, we know the difference between a discount and a deal. We know that a discount is just a price cut, while a deal is a value proposition. We know that a discount is a short-term tactic, while a deal is a long-term strategy. We know that a discount is a way to get rid of excess inventory, while a deal is a way to build a loyal customer base.

So why should you discount what our competitors say about discounts? Because we know what we're doing. We know how to offer real value to our customers. We know how to build a loyal customer base. We know how to succeed in business. And we know that you should follow our lead.

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